

A
MOSAIC OF
MISSIONARY
METHODS

WESLEYAN
METHODIST
MISSIONARY
SOCIETY

W. C. Thorpe.

Swanwick 192

A MOSAIC OF MISSIONARY METHODS

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**FITTED TOGETHER BY
STANLEY SOWTON**

**WESLEYAN METHODIST
MISSIONARY SOCIETY
24 BISHOPSGATE, LONDON, E.C.2**

Foreword

FOREWORD

HAPPY-GO-LUCKY methods have long since been at a discount among the rapidly growing number of missionary workers in the home Churches. On the other hand efficiency down to the smallest detail, and a keen appetite for new and better ways of working, have come to be the rule and not the exception. This is as it should be, seeing that missions are now no longer regarded by responsible thinkers as the fad of the few, but the supreme reason for which the Church of Jesus Christ exists.

It naturally follows that from the actual experiences of hundreds, in fact thousands, of missionary workers in the home Churches there is abundant material from which a manual of missionary method can be compiled. It is far more satisfactory to state what *has* been done and what *is* being done than to attempt any doctrinaire dissertation on missionary work in some Methodist Utopia. This little volume is therefore to be a medium for passing on some of the experiences and opinions of successful secretaries which have reached the Mission House in recent years. It is hoped that it may be of some service to all our workers and, just

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now particularly, to those who for the first time find themselves responsible for some department of missionary work. Of course no secretary will wish to attempt every new scheme referred to, but, on the other hand, there will not be a single worker anywhere, no matter how devoted, experienced, or ingenious he may be, who will not get some fresh ideas, I hope inspiration, for his work from the experiences of others who are doing elsewhere exactly similar work and under much the same conditions.

No separate section has been devoted to the work of the Women's Auxiliary, but a large part of the material applies equally, or with little adaptations to both sections of our common work. While the two organisations are housed in separate buildings, have different committees and officers, and keep their finances entirely distinct, yet they should work in close co-operation in the same constituency and for the same great end.

The utmost care should be taken in every circuit to prevent even the appearance of rivalry or conflict between the two committees. It has been abundantly proved that interest in one part of the work stimulates, rather than diminishes interest in the other, and it should be known everywhere that we work together and not in competition and rivalry.

Every circuit should do its best for the Parent Society. Every circuit should do its best for the Women's Auxiliary. Let each missionary official in the circuits, as at the Mission House, rejoice

Foreword

in the success of either fund, and let all combine in the various plans suggested in the following pages for a campaign of education and inspiration which shall deepen the prayer life of the Church, tap new springs of generosity, and lead to offers of personal service.

No attempt has been made to acknowledge by name the very large number of workers who have provided the material for this "mosaic" of method. Sometimes I am indebted to just one or two for nearly the whole of a chapter, while in the very next section of the book as many as fifty friends have, all unconsciously, contributed something. I am sure I am consulting their wishes, as well as those of others who have helped me with proof-reading and the index in giving no names.

The obvious difficulty has been, not to hunt up material, but to select and to arrange the mass of matter which has been accumulating during the last twelve years. Often the idea contained in a single sentence might be expanded quite usefully into a whole page. If further details are wanted on any particular subject, correspondence on that or any other topic will be welcomed.

No plan is in itself magical or automatic. Back of the plan there must be a man, and within the man there must be a prayer-wrought purpose.

Enthusiasm for the work is assumed. No manual of method will galvanise into activity any missionary official whose missionary interests

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are dead or non-existent—one reason being that he will never read it !

The pages that follow are for the men and women who have a missionary task and a missionary vision, and who, by their faithful work at home, are standing by the missionary, the native minister, the teacher, making the doctor's work possible and opening doors otherwise closed.

“ Hands that would touch the world's great need
To Christ must cling.
Zeal that the cause of truth would speed
Must spread the wing
In Heaven's own light.”

STANLEY SOWTON

24, BISHOPSGATE,
LONDON, E.C.2.

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I

IN THE CIRCUIT

"It can be done if someone will take the trouble."

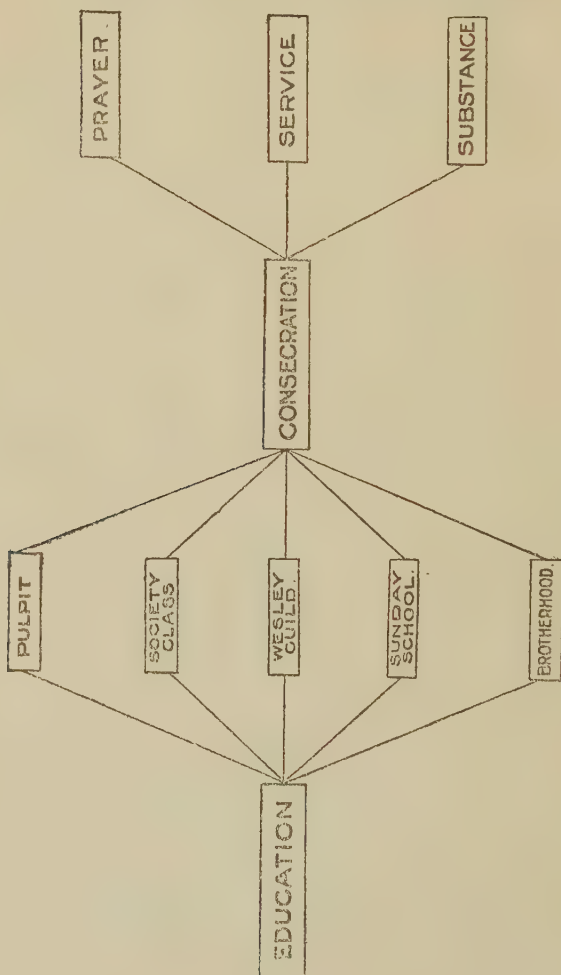
As everybody knows, Methodist "circuits" differ widely in constitution and condition. We have the well-to-do suburb and the inner belt of the larger centres of population, the compact city mission, and the wide agricultural area grouped round the average country town. This being so it is obvious that any suggestions on "missionary methods *in the circuit*" will need to be adapted to local circumstances by the man or the woman on the spot.

But having said this, we can still urge the importance of certain aspects of the work which are common to all the varying types which go to make up our Church life as a whole.

Every circuit should have (1) a definite missionary policy, (2) officers to carry it out, and (3) an efficient organisation for that purpose.

One circuit visualised its missionary policy as follows:—

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Another circuit, in addition to a pledge annually to increase its gifts, has a *special* aim each year. First of all it put the circulation of the missionary magazines on a satisfactory basis. Then it thoroughly canvassed the circuit for the Helpers' Union. Then came a year when in season and out of season the uses of the missionary box were urged. After that came study circles for the children and a series of juvenile meetings resulting therefrom. Then the Laymen's Movement was introduced. Better do one or two things well each year than attempt everything at once.

The missionary organisation of circuits varies considerably. One department of work may be in a high state of efficiency while others are distinctly backward. In few circuits is everything as well worked as it might be. The missionary officers of the circuit are the proper people to frame a comprehensive missionary policy, extending perhaps over a series of years.

The Mission House has a policy which changes as necessity dictates, and it is a happy state of affairs when the policy of the circuit is in line with that announced by the Missionary Committee.

No one has ever yet found a circuit where missionary success has been achieved by accident, but there are many where it has come as the result of the vision and effort of one individual. Everywhere it is the living personality, the convinced mind and the warm throbbing heart,

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that secure success. The whole question is one of missionary leaders. Hence the utmost importance attaches to the appointment of the trio of officers—the ministerial secretary, the lay secretary and the treasurer—upon whom, humanly speaking, everything depends in the missionary leadership of a circuit.

There are scores of ministers who have acted as circuit missionary secretary for ten, fifteen or even twenty years, and in that time have never reported a decrease, and they stoutly maintain that they never will! It can never be estimated how much the Missionary Society owes to ministers who, among many other duties, begrudge no service that they can render to the cause of missions.

It is a good rule for the duties of the circuit missionary secretariat to be definitely divided between the minister and the layman. There are certain matters which the minister can usually better attend to, and others which naturally fall to the layman. It is as vicious for one official to do all the work as for the other to do none. The days when we can afford to have sinecures have long since gone as far as missionary service is concerned.

The work is divided in one well organised circuit as follows:—

The ministerial secretary makes sure that his two colleagues are active partners in the circuit missionary campaign, undertakes to obtain the co-operation of the local preachers, secures and corresponds with the deputation for the town

In the Circuit

meeting, and obtains laymen to take the chairs at the central meetings and in the villages.

The lay secretary convenes the circuit committee, which meets three times a year, and keeps the minutes of its meetings. He works out with his colleague an educational programme for the year, and attends to all its details. All items of income are paid to him, and every penny in hand reaches the circuit treasurer by the first week each month. He writes up and balances the annual circuit schedule, the finishing touches being put to it in consultation with the minister. He keeps in close touch with the three ladies who act respectively as circuit secretaries for boxes, for the Helpers' Union and for the magazines. The printing for the anniversaries, the early issue of Christmas Offering cards and the many other miscellaneous duties are each faithfully attended to all through the year by this same layman. The minister is always as much at home by the side of his colleague's roll-top desk as the layman is in the minister's study.

There should be some such fair and definite division of duties between the ministerial and the lay circuit secretaries, and they should work in the closest possible co-operation.

Some of the work of the circuit secretaries can be with great advantage devolved upon others. "Organise, deputise and supervise" is as sound a maxim in missionary organisation as in the business world. It is thus that a missionary Cadet Corps is trained, with great advantage

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both to the prospective missionary officer and to the cause needing his help.

The circuit missionary treasurer is required by Conference to remit to the district treasurer at least once a month all missionary moneys in his hands. There are hundreds of business men who sign the annual schedule as treasurer who are as zealous in the discharge of this and all other missionary duties, as in the direction of their own businesses. One such, a shrewd man of affairs, at once saw the common sense of the motto, "half the income in the first half of the year." He has two anxieties now: first, to get hold of every item of missionary income at the very earliest moment; and second, to hustle along by the ninth of each month the largest possible sum to the district treasurer. He watches each issue of the "H.O.D. Magazine" and frankly tells each Quarterly Meeting, when, as required by Conference, he makes his report on the missionary income and remittances to date from each church, that while the circuit is doing better it has by no means yet done its best. He keeps a sharp eye on expenses to see that the circuit secretaries avoid on the one hand extravagance in their administration, and on the other, a parsimony that is costly in the long run. He is "behind" the secretaries in any new venture that commends itself to his judgment and is prepared on occasion if there is a little element of risk to guarantee it financially. He is a great encourager of the local helpers and thoroughly believes in "team work." Many a young

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juvenile secretary or newly-appointed village official has had an entirely new conception of his place and importance in the missionary life of the circuit as the result of a chat with the circuit treasurer at the "reception tea" or some other circuit function.

Some wise words from two experienced workers are inserted here for the benefit of district and circuit officers. "Occasionally a square peg gets into a round missionary hole. If this is really the case the greatest kindness to both the peg and the hole is painless extraction. But it is well for us always to be on our guard against an impatient intolerance of some people who do not see things exactly as we see them, but whom God has permitted to be in office. See to it that you use both your knees and your wits that you may win them and help them."

"If a local secretary is dilatory, perfunctory, easily discouraged, too busy with other things, what is to be done? That is where the circuit secretary comes in. He has to arrange for the transfer of that particular officer to work more suited to his capacity, and he has to do it kindly and tactfully so as to avoid offence. It is not an easy thing to do but it can be done. I have had occasion to perform this delicate function several times, but I never lost a friend in doing it. At all costs the local organisation must be made efficient, and if the weak brother is properly approached he will see that it is the cause that is the first consideration."

We have dwelt long enough on the executive

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officers of the circuit missionary committee; let us turn to the committee itself.

"Will some one move the re-appointment of the circuit missionary committee?" said one super in a certain Quarterly Meeting. "Would you mind telling us who they are, Mr. Chairman?" was the enquiry of a recently arrived local preacher. The secretary of the meeting began to turn over the pages of his minute book amidst a painful pause. Presently the next item of business was taken while the search was continued. Ultimately a list of the eight-year-old circuit committee was read and it was found that they had never met since their appointment. That Quarterly Meeting was genuinely ashamed of itself. The circuit missionary committee needs to be the strongest possible body of men and women, all taking their work seriously.

The March Quarterly Meeting always has important business to transact, but there is no more important item on the agenda than the appointment of the circuit missionary committee and officers. In a few places it is claimed that the Quarterly Meeting itself can best transact the missionary business of the circuit, but surely the ideal is a circuit committee appointed for the purpose—an ideal, by the way, that has been reached in many wide country circuits. As to the constitution of the committee opinions will of course differ.

"We have just added to our committee," writes one circuit secretary, "the secretary of the Brotherhood in our circuit chapel, two Wesley

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Guild workers, the most active of our local preachers, and two more Sunday School superintendents." Wise appointments, every one of them.

"We have to fight tooth and nail the old idea of a missionary committee meeting held once a year for one severely limited half-hour to discuss missionary finance and nothing else. Can we expect busy men and women, especially in these days, to give time for such an empty proceeding? Give them something worth listening to, set some of them solving the problems raised by the local missionary situation, entrust a sub-committee with the duty of reporting on some of the barren patches of the circuit, and things will become interesting."

Here is an actual agenda of the missionary committee of a strong mission in the North of England. No wonder that the attendance was large and that those present spent two whole hours to very great advantage.

1. Can our present local organisation be made more efficient?

What F.M. offices should be held by individuals in each branch?

Local offices open:—

Secretary for adult work.

Juvenile secretary.

Adult box secretary.

"F.F." secretary.

Helpers' Union secretary.

Adult subscription collector.

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2. Roll call of officials.
Election and confirmation.
3. Plan of campaign for the year.
Departments:—
Publicity:—
Preaching.
Meetings—prayer, class.
Helpers' Union.
“Foreign Field” and “At Home
and Abroad.”
Other missionary literature.
Financial:—
Adult subscriptions.
Adult boxes.
Juvenile boxes.
Number of boxes at each branch.
Are they in use?
4. Suggestions for meetings; dates, deputation, chairman.
5. Possibility of getting in all available missionary moneys by end of June.
Plans for report at next meeting by local secretaries of the quarter's working.
6. Branch meetings.
7. Other business.
8. Date of next meeting.

Most circuit committees find it best to meet at least three times a year. The first meeting is in January to pass the missionary accounts for the previous year as per Conference instruction (“Minutes 1916,” p. 470). At this meeting

In the Circuit

also some plans are usually made for the future, and the nature of the report to the March Quarterly Meeting decided upon. Many circuit committees are adopting the wise plan of budgeting for the coming year at their January meeting. The success of the "Better-than-the-best-of-the-last-ten-years" and the "Five-per-cent.-increase" campaigns is largely due to the circuit committee having ascertained what had been done, what required to be done, and planning how to do it. In this way is most likely to be accomplished that steady increase of income upon which the Missionary Committee relies. Classic instances of successful missionary budgeting are a Surrey circuit where there was an increase of twenty-five per cent. in two years, and a mission hall in the outer London area where in four years there has been a phenomenal growth from £35 to £233, and plans have been laid for further steady increases in the three following years up to £350.

A second circuit missionary committee is usually called to discuss and perfect the details of the campaign of missionary meetings. Such a gathering can be either absorbingly fascinating or distressingly dull—according to the will of the responsible officers.

"Our third committee for the calendar year, held early in December, is in the nature of a stock-taking," writes one secretary. "We can by then estimate pretty accurately what our income will be. The subscriptions have been collected long since, our anniversaries have all

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been held, three-quarters of the juvenile money has been paid in and most of our boxes have been opened at least once. We make a great point of getting the villages to make up any lee-way by means of the Christmas Offering cards, and we usually issue a letter of appeal to all our boxholders to do 'better than their best' during the closing weeks of the year. This year we are arranging a special circuit meeting during the third week in January for the consecration of the missionary gifts of the circuit. I am confident that there need never be any shortage of missionary funds when we take our people into our confidence, and appeal to them on the highest grounds."

"I do not hesitate to say," states another correspondent, "that our annual lovefeast for all missionary officials, lady collectors, circuit stewards, and ministers has had more to do with the splendid increases of the past ten years than anything else. Our circuit treasurer issues the invitations. However discouraged our workers may be when they meet, the warmth or rather the glow that is kindled, as one after another of our local secretaries relates his or her experience, sends everybody away determined not only to aim high, but to get there."

Another experienced secretary urges that one committee a year in every place should be of a social character. At a recent district missionary committee a superintendent minister gave one very suggestive reason why the missionary income in his circuit has been very considerably

In the Circuit

increased during the year. The circuit steward invited the missionary committee and the collectors to a meeting in his garden and, of course, having had fairly long notice everybody came. There was a freshness and vigour in the procedure of that committee which showed itself in many ways, one of which was that half the income of that circuit was paid during the first half of the year.

The circuit committee which is working at a hundred-per-cent efficiency is the one that not only discusses the work to be done *but actually does it.*

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II

IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

"Nine-tenths of the home Income of Missionary Societies come from one-tenth of the Church."—EDINBURGH REPORTS, 1910.

ONE wonders what is the proportion to-day in the Methodist Church. Probably the position is better than the conditions which led to the sweeping generalisation quoted above. At the same time, despite the great and gratifying improvement of recent years, no one who has any wide acquaintance with Methodism as a whole will confess himself satisfied with the present position of missionary interest and missionary gifts. "The whole Church giving its whole strength to winning the whole world" is an ideal at present in the far distance. We venture to hope that the experiences in this chapter, gathered as they are from many quarters, may do something toward a closer approximation to that ideal.

"I wish I had my days to go over again," sighed a superintendent minister, a life-long missionary enthusiast. "I did not learn till recently that the first thing and the second thing and the third thing to do for missions in any circuit is to Educate! Educate!! Educate!!!" There must be many of the very best-meaning of our workers who have bought

In the Local Church

their experience in much the same way. It is the veriest common-sense to see that the good seed must be carefully sown before you can expect a harvest—missionary or otherwise. A solid year of missionary sowing is none too much for any minister to put in during his triennium in a circuit. He should be well content to get an increasing harvest during the two years that follow and, what is more important still, to know that the harvest will continue when he is far away.

Presumably the missionary secretary in the local Church will be a member of the circuit committee, so that he may share its plans (see previous chapter), and co-operate in carrying them out.

“ I am gradually maturing my plans for missionary education from the pulpit, in the Class Meeting, in each department of the Sunday School, and in the Wesley Guild—can you suggest any other departments I could include ? ” Thus queried one keen young secretary. In reply he was asked for information as to the frequency of missionary addresses in the Brotherhood ; what missionary books were read, in turn with others, at the Mothers’ Meeting ; when they last had a missionary hymn sung as a solo at an ordinary Sunday night service ; and how he was going to utilise the Ladies’ Sewing Meeting. The longer one continues in the work the more truth does one see in the statement that “ there is a point of contact between every department of the Church life and the missionary cause, and big blessings come to both when the contact is made.”

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It would be absurd to suggest a panacea for missionary apathy in the Church ; to do so would be to adopt the methods of the quack. What we have tried to do in the pages that follow is to collate the experience of successful missionary experimenters, in the hope that their investigations may be of value to those who desire equally gratifying results.

As to missionary officials in a local Church, as a rule one is sufficient—the secretary. A local treasurer is surely unnecessary, as the sooner all moneys are in the hands of the circuit authorities the better. For a Church of any size, say for one which has a resident minister, a local missionary committee is desirable, and this should be as carefully appointed and with much the same aims as the circuit committee to which reference has already been made. It used to be the custom for local missionary committees to be appointed at the annual missionary meetings. The December Quarterly Meeting has the right to appoint local committees not otherwise appointed. Experience has shown however that it is best for such a committee to be appointed for that purpose by the annual Leaders' Meeting rather than to have missionary business dealt with by the busy Leaders' Meeting itself.

The pace of the committee is not likely to outrun that of the secretary—he is the key man, often the key woman, and the Missionary Society has no greater asset than the present and prospective services of these devoted workers.

The local secretary may elect to do all the

In the Local Church

work himself, or he may prefer to have a number of helpers.

“I find that I can do with five assistants” is the experience of one of our finest workers. “These are (1) ‘The Foreign Field’ distributor, (2) the Helpers’ Union secretary, (3) the mission study leader, (4) the box secretary, and (5) a scout on a cycle as a special missionary messenger.”

We asked one local secretary to set down in black and white ten of his most important missionary duties in the order of their importance. His list was as follows:—

1. Circulating the missionary magazines.
2. Arranging for the missionary Prayer Meeting.
3. Supervising the work of the Helpers’ Union.
4. Keeping up to date the missionary notice board in the Church lobby.
5. Attending the meetings of the Sunday School Council.
6. Attending the Leaders’ Meeting.
7. Trying to secure a missionary talk to children in the Sunday Morning service at least once a month.
8. Meeting the missionary collectors in May and in December.
9. Opening the boxes quarterly.
10. Putting every ounce of energy I have, and every helpful new idea I can hear of, into the missionary anniversary.

The enumeration of his duties and the order in which he places them make an interesting

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study. Apparently there are seven different things to be attended to before he begins to be active on the financial side. Is he right or is he wrong in theory? Certainly there is nothing wrong in practice as we can see from the steadily growing financial results which he tabulates carefully from year to year. The policy of "get-rich-soon" and the "quick-and-easy" method are not for the missionary secretary. "No gains without pains" is a working maxim for God's labourer in any part of His vineyard.

The principle of budgeting ahead for the missionary income is one that may well engage the attention of the secretary and committee of the local Church as of the circuit. A five per cent. increase all round is not likely to come by accident. The amount to be expected in new and increased subscriptions, from new and old boxes, from the anniversary, and from the juvenile collectors should be apportioned—not on the unwelcome principle of an assessment, but on the stimulating principle of a goal which the local workers have set themselves to reach. Each year some form of special effort may well be adopted, *e.g.* a summer gathering, a missionary social, a missionary market. The local committee in its budgeting session will do well to remember the sound wisdom of valuing to the full the difficulties to be overcome, and somewhat underestimating the amount to be expected from each source of income.

It is quite possible that some local committees and some local Church officials may see diffi-

In the Local Church

culties and raise objections as plans for a really complete campaign are laid before them.

In a recent number of the "H.O.D. Magazine" there appeared the following paragraph: "Four objections and four answers to them.

"*First*—'These new plans are impracticable.' On the contrary, they are entirely practicable and have been tried by ordinary everyday kind of folk in places just like ours.

"*Second*—'It means a good deal of trouble.' Yes, but Christ went to a good deal of trouble to bring salvation to men, and His servants ought to be willing to go to some trouble to make that salvation known to those for whom Christ intended it, and to whom He expressly commanded them to send it.

"*Third*—'It entails expense.' If, as the result of these new plans, your income is increased by 50 per cent., or even 5 per cent., a 50 per cent. or 5 per cent. increase of the very much smaller sum spent in expenses still leaves the result an excellent bit of business for the Missionary Society.

"*Fourth*—'Our people are already hard pressed.' Whatever we do or fail to do we must not be disobedient to the call of Christ, or desert the missionaries whom we have sent to distant lands, and whose sole human dependence is upon us. Economise on foreign missions last, not first. But all experience shows that giving to foreign missions from right motives opens all the springs of beneficence, mightily enlarges the soul, and results in a rich reflex blessing."

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III

IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

"Too long we have exploited the child when we should have educated him."

"You can evangelise the world in a generation if you will only train a generation to do it."

QUITE a library has been written during the last decade on the subject of missions in the Sunday School, and most missionary secretaries make it their business to have at least two or three of the most essential volumes in a handy place on their shelves. These are the working tools that no missionary craftsman will want to be without.

The expert psychologists among Sunday School workers are agreed that while the cause of missions needs all the help that the child can bring, now and later, the child himself needs far more the unselfish appeal which missionary work makes to him in a way that scarcely anything else can.

All that may have been said in former chapters about the prime necessity for missionary education needs to be emphasised a hundred-fold when the missionary worker is contemplating entering a Sunday School. We have no right to take money from children for missions

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or any other object unless the children give it, or collect it, out of a real interest in the work to be helped. It is possible to gain pence to-day, but to lose pounds to-morrow.

That children can be interested, fascinated and stirred into action by the missionary appeal is being proved over and over again in hundreds of Sunday Schools to-day.

A great deal of responsibility rests upon the young man or woman who occupies the enviable position of juvenile missionary secretary. The office has a quaint-sounding title, one we have inherited unquestioningly from the past, but one which, while it may convey little to the outsider, represents an opportunity that an angel from Heaven might covet.

Listen to these bits of "experience" gathered from juvenile secretaries, in some cases by personal chats and sometimes through the post.

"Nothing gives me so much joy in all my Church duties as working for missions in the Sunday School."

"We are making dozens of new missionary workers in our School and, please God, we are preparing some of them, unconsciously perhaps, for service on the mission field."

"'Every scholar doing something' is our motto, and we are near its realisation. All are getting to know, many are getting to care, some are getting to give, *their own money not other people's*, and a few are learning to pray."

"I am ashamed of the little I have done, and the little I am doing now, as I see how

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some of our boys and girls are working for missions."

"If ever you handled consecrated coins at the Mission House you are doing so when the money from my bairns reaches you."

"I am continually making new demands upon my children for personal service for missions. Some of my collectors have 'rounds' each month for delivering the 'Foreign Field.' Others have constituted themselves a most effective bill-distributing agency prior to the missionary meetings. The boys do all the hard work when there is a missionary tea or a missionary supper. The more I ask the more they want to do. It seems to me that few other appeals teach boys and girls unconsciously the meaning of sacrificial service as does the appeal of foreign missions."

"I should like to tell you what happened in our Primary Department the other day. We had been showing the children the 'Hope of the World' picture, and this time instead of talking about the need of the children grouped around the Master, we told them of His great heart of love, big enough to take in all the children of the whole world. At the end of the afternoon one little maid after putting on her hat and coat turned to the picture before leaving the room and blew Him a kiss."

Jesus Christ and that little child had met. Happy the man or woman anywhere who can bring about such a meeting. The great missionary purpose of a juvenile secretary is em-

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phatically not merely to raise the largest possible sum of money, but to capture the children for the work of spreading the Kingdom at home and abroad, so that as long as they live they will be eager to work and to give for that great end. This and no less should be the aim of all missionary workers in the Sunday School.

It is impossible in a single paragraph to state, much more to argue, the importance and obligation of missionary teaching in the regular Bible lesson. "A knowledge of the expanding Kingdom of God, of humanity's heart-hunger for the Gospel, and of the devotion and heroism of God's messengers throughout the world is most necessary for the application of Bible truths to present-day problems." It is worth any amount of trouble, the writing of any number of letters, the circulation of every helpful pamphlet, and better still quiet talks with ones and twos and threes, to secure the personal co-operation of the teachers in missionary seed-sowing in the Sunday School. The Bible is, and always will be, the greatest missionary book. How short-sighted of us missionary workers if we ever forget that fact!

Of missionary "helps" available there is literally no end; and it is comforting to reflect that every year sees many more being provided—useful every one of them.

There are brightly-coloured and really artistic pictures, as well as instructive object lessons and large-type books to delight the Primary children and, for the use of their teacher, stories

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about babies in all lands. There are the series of "Talks" for use in the Junior School, best given by the teacher for six or seven weeks consecutively in the morning school or on a week-night. There are books written particularly for schoolboys (and therefore beloved by school-girls) such as the "Pathfinder" Series edited by Basil Mathews, and "The Romance of Missionary Heroism" in Seeley's well-known series. These and a dozen other books should be in the School library, and, more important still, in the hands of the boys and girls. Let the superintendent, or better still a boy or girl, read to the whole school a carefully selected page or two from one of the latest missionary books in the library, and that volume will not lack readers for many weeks to come.

The lives of Arthur Jackson, of Irene Petrie, of David Hill are just as valuable for the adolescent period. "The Secret of the Raj" and "The Story of Islam" are types of another class of book which it is well to put into the hands of boys and girls attending public or secondary schools.

In short there is abundant missionary literature suitable to every age. The aim of the missionary worker should be to bring the books and the readers together.

There are also books about method, which must on no account be neglected. Fancy starting out to set a School ablaze for missions and disregarding the missionary fuel all ready to hand in Miss Brain's "Holding the Ropes"—to mention one book among many.

In the Sunday School

In all this there should be the closest co-operation between the officials of the School. The missionary obligation is just as great upon the superintendent, the secretary and the teachers of a School as it is upon the juvenile missionary secretary. It is nothing short of a tragedy if hard work at one end of a School is neutralised by lack of sympathy at the other end. Just as we have pleaded for a missionary policy for the circuit and the local Church, so we plead for one in the Sunday School.

It is surely a reasonable thing that now and again there should be a special missionary session of the local Sunday School Council. It is a thousand pities that so many reports on missionary activities made to so many different committees dwell only on finance. It matters far more to have the processes right than to be for ever measuring the product. If there is constant care that a plentiful supply of missionary food is given to the children, there need be no anxiety as to their growing in every kind of way.

One small Sunday School in Kent has in two years increased its missionary income from £31 to £45, one effect of an almost absurdly simple cause—the telling of missionary stories each week by the superintendent.

A minister writing of a Sunday School superintendent in the Bedford district says, "He never allows a Sunday to pass without a word for missions. One teacher told me it

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was worth while going to School if it was only to hear Mr. X. give out the missionary notices."

Regular missionary addresses from the desk, regular missionary lessons in the classes, will form part of the missionary policy of a Sunday School keen to do its bit in the world-wide war for Christ's Kingdom. There are abundant helps provided for both superintendent and teacher, specimens of which will be sent gladly by the Mission House on request.

Despite the length of this chapter, room must be found for a few telegraphic despatches from missionary Sunday Schools which may be suggestive to other people.

"We intend to have a missionary School every Sunday morning for three months in our Junior Department."

"I am glad to say that all our collectors are in junior study circles now."

"We are rather great at 'questions' in our school. Sometimes I ask them, sometimes I get the collectors to ask them, and we usually get somewhere in the answers."

"Last Sunday two members of our Institute gave short papers on different sections of 'Wesley's World Parish.' We had a most interesting twenty minutes and afterwards there were seven young people who wanted to borrow this fascinatingly interesting history of the Missionary Society."

"Our 'march past of missionary heroes' was a great success. Every class made a banner,

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and a child from that class told the story of their particular hero from the platform. Our minister 'summed up,' and prayed that God's Roll of Honour might contain the names of many of the scholars from our School."

" 'Dictionary day' may not convey much to you, but it meant a lot to us. Twelve children came on to the platform, and in turn amid breathless silence wrote on the blackboard such common, though often little understood, missionary words as Pariah, Muhammadanism, Fetish, Dom, Caste, Purdah, Hinterland, Creole, Veldt, and in a sentence or two explained something of their meaning."

" We always have a missionary solo when we have a missionary address."

" Our missionary museum grows nicely. Some of our boys made the cupboard. Our superintendent gave the glass front, and scarcely a month goes by without one exhibit or more being added. Of course with each addition its story is told to the whole School."

" Our second hymn every Sunday afternoon is a missionary hymn."

" We have a big missionary map, made by four of our collectors. The map is often fixed at the back of the platform, and we stick in another flag as we add something to our stock of knowledge about some missionary or some part of the mission field."

" We found out long ago that our children love to play the games that are in vogue among boys and girls on the mission field. Your new

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publication 'Missionary Play Hours' will be an immense help to us in this connection."

The missionary ladder and the missionary clock are now well established features in many Schools, but a better plan still is to have a "missionary corner" in the Sunday School. In one London school a large notice board is constantly being renewed with all kinds of missionary appeals to the eye. Pictures carefully mounted on brown paper taken from missionary magazines that the children do not usually see, missionary postcards, missionary diagrams made by the boys and girls themselves, foreign stamps from the mission field, all these and many other items appear week by week.

One secretary says, "I am not much of a speaker myself, but I make our notice board speak each Sunday, and I am amply repaid for any trouble involved."

The exercise book of a Burmese schoolboy, or some other curio from the mission field, announcements of prayer-needs, collectors' totals, etc.—all these in turn will make the missionary notice board as carefully scanned by the young people as is the tape-machine of a news agency by adults.

"The juvenile missionary meeting is also a matter that will engage attention some weeks before it comes off. A really worth-while programme given in first-class style is what the secretary will aim at and achieve. While he will make the best use of all kinds of helpful material supplied ready-made from the Mission

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House, he will always be on the look out to procure good original items from old or young helpers in his own School. Hundreds of active workers in every department in our Church life have begun their platform work while children at a juvenile missionary meeting. 'Only the best is good enough' when it is to be memorised by children. Nowadays secretaries are relying less on the spectacular in the shape of costumes from the Mission House, and more on the quality of the speeches or dialogues that are given."

We know of Schools where the Primary Department gives annually a missionary evening, and it is one of the most delightful and popular Church events of the year. It seems the natural outcome of dropping missionary pennies into the glass bowl each week, and the telling of missionary baby stories, that the tiny tots should have a missionary evening of their own. Certainly no other missionary meeting attracts so large a percentage of proud parents. It is impossible to begin missionary education too young.

One rejoices without ceasing that all those methods and very many more have been evolved during the last ten or twelve years. How very few worth-while missionary books there were to be had in the early years of this century! Who ever heard of a junior study circle then? What material was there for any leader who wanted to conduct one? *Then*, there were a few who instinctively knew how to give missionary addresses to children, but alas, many did *not* know

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and had no opportunity of learning. Now there are hundreds who have acquired from experts this happy art.

Meanwhile has all this time and attention devoted to education been productive financially?

Let these figures answer.

	1905	1917
Total amount raised for Foreign Missions by Christmas Offerings and Juvenile As- sociations	£24,327	£39,675

A great variety of method is to be found in the different ways in which Sunday Schools raise money for missions. Some Schools have collections periodically, while there are others that depend almost entirely upon boxes in the classes. Some Schools, again, use the Christmas Offering cards and focus all their money-raising efforts for missions into a few short weeks at the end of the year when appeals are very plentiful. The most popular and approved method however is by weekly collecting-books which are in the hands of the children all the year through.

One of the chief objections to the class boxes is the cumbrous nature of the boxes themselves and the necessary noise and confusion in distributing and collecting them every week. Then, to keep the boxes with the money inside, even in a locked cupboard, is to put temptation into the path of some possible pilferer, as some Schools have found out to their grief. The class envelope is gradually taking the place of the boxes in most up-to-date Schools.

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A Cardiff School found that the substitution of envelopes for boxes magically transposed the figures of their missionary contributions. In two years the total of £14 was increased to £41 !

Another secretary writes, " Since using envelopes instead of boxes in the classes we have nearly doubled the amount raised. How any School can be satisfied with the old-fashioned method passes my comprehension."

Scores of Schools have found that when they have changed Christmas Offering cards for the system of weekly collecting, the amount raised has been increased by fifty or a hundred per cent.

It is, then, from the weekly collecting books that the best results may be expected. Collecting material should never be placed indiscriminately in the hands of boys and girls. The more impressive the enrolling of even the youngest recruits in the great army of missionary workers, the more satisfactory are the results likely to be. One secretary writes: " We always put the new collecting books and the class envelopes on the superintendent's desk at the beginning of the year, and a few useful words are said about the issue of new equipment, and then in a brief prayer we ask that each book and envelope may be rightly used and that all our helpers may be made faithful in the use of that which is entrusted to them."

The children should be encouraged to do their work during the week and not on Sundays. This opinion is strongly held by one secretary who says: " It is a poor ideal to give of missionary

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work to encourage the children to do little more than 'hold up' good-tempered members of the congregation on Sunday mornings, and equally long-suffering teachers on Sunday afternoons. I give a ha'penny a week to all collectors who ask me on Sunday and a penny a week to all who will call for it on a weekday—arrears in each case being strictly limited to two weeks."

Another contributor to a number of collectors has systematised his giving, and evolved a plan which others might care to adopt. Let him speak for himself. "I used to give to the juvenile collectors in a haphazard fashion, and never quite knew how much I was giving. It was much easier to say 'yes' to a child than 'no' and I couldn't stay always to look at the book and see how the collector was getting on. As a result of a talk with the secretary I agreed to become the eleventh subscriber in every collecting book. When there were twenty subscribers my name went down for another ha'penny as the twenty-first and then as the thirty-first, and the forty-first and so on. It is a great delight to recognise the zeal of one particularly hard-working collector with sixty subscribers by subscribing threepence a week. The secretary found me one of the lady teachers who acts as my cashier. I give her ten shillings from time to time. She keeps a strict account of the expenditure, closely inspects the collectors' books and is always urging them to make still greater demands upon the funds in her hands."

The work of the missionary secretary should

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be done in such a way as to be for all time an object lesson to the children in smooth-running efficiency. One secretary has a board suspended from two screws near the School door. Into this board are fixed thirty or forty hooks, each numbered. Every collector's book is also numbered, and each collector is provided with a bag bearing the same number. The collectors hang their bags, with book and money inside, on the proper hook, and after the School is in session the secretary takes the board with the bags attached into the vestry, and quietly proceeds with his entries, the books automatically corresponding with the order of his cash book. Later, the board is replaced, with *most* of the bags, but a few are kept back each week. The collectors, not finding them on the rack, go to the secretary, who can in that way keep in touch with the collectors, and express appreciation, or urge greater effort, or make any necessary enquiries, as occasion may demand.

Another juvenile secretary, in a School which for many years has given between £200 and £300 a year for missions, has three assistants. Each assistant deals with a third of the collectors. For this purpose they are divided into sections, A-F, G-N, O-Z. He enters the amounts received on a rough cash sheet which is subsequently posted into the secretary's book, the latter being kept like a bank ledger.

It is up to the secretary to work out his own methods according to the circumstances in which he finds himself; scores of eager young

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minds are all unconsciously forming their own standards from the way in which they see Church work done. Woe betide the man who is not only slipshod himself but is also teaching slipshod methods to those who will be the Church workers of the next generation.

The juvenile secretary is an officer of the Sunday School, and as such is a member of the local Sunday School Council, and should also be on the local missionary committee if there is one.

A man who has been doing this work for a generation puts it thus: "The juvenile secretary wants to keep in the closest possible touch with his collectors, both on Sunday and during the week. He must never forget that he is responsible not only for collecting missionary moneys but for distributing missionary information. This he will do himself as he is able, and he will get it done by others as opportunity offers. One junior study circle a year should certainly be aimed at in every school. Missionary addresses, curio talks and lantern lectures from time to time in the Band of Hope, the telling of missionary 'yarns' to the Boys' Brigade and the Scouts, are also matters of which the juvenile secretary will not lose sight. It is a happy arrangement if he can have access to the Junior Society Classes, or perhaps better still get the leaders to give missionary talks regularly to their junior members."

The ideal of personal service on the mission field should be placed before the boys and girls

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and young men and women from time to time. A School is greatly honoured when a former scholar or teacher becomes a missionary, and such an event should be specially marked in its history.

One large School in South Wales, which year by year has given very considerable sums of money to missions, was distressed because no scholar had ever gone to the mission field. An effective though silent appeal was presented when a large frame appeared among the pictures on the walls. Inside the glass however there was no picture but the announcement, "This frame is reserved for the photograph of the first missionary from our Sunday School."

The juvenile secretary will keep in close touch with the Mission House. He will want to know at least once a year what there is new for his department of work. He will get to see a copy of the "H.O.D. Magazine" each month, with its wealth of suggestions from workers all over the country. He will apply for his supply of collecting material in good time each year, and he will send in January a list of juvenile collectors who raised £5 and over by box, book or card during the previous year, and who are therefore members of the Juvenile Missionary Collectors' Distinguished Service Order.

Another duty of the juvenile missionary secretary is the monthly distribution of "At Home and Abroad," which is provided gratis for all collectors raising not less than 10s. per annum. As a rule, supplies are in every circuit by the

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first week in each month. Very often the juvenile secretary can lighten the work of the circuit missionary secretary by fetching his magazines, or better still making this a missionary service on the part of some young helper.

Many secretaries make a practice of sending frequent letters to their collectors. Sometimes these are personal, sometimes they are circular letters, and sometimes one of the Mission House pamphlets for juvenile collectors is enclosed. Sometimes these letters are returned with the collecting book, sometimes they are delivered by special messenger (one of the collectors) and sometimes they are sent by post—the receipt of a letter is always a matter of importance to a child. Missionary picture postcards, especially on birthdays, also have their use, as many secretaries have found out. A special letter with the new book or the new Christmas Offering card seems quite a suitable plan. The Mission House can supply attractive leaflets for inclusion in such correspondence, if desired.

The juvenile secretary will make prompt and regular payments to circuit authorities of all moneys in his hands. Once a month is the best plan and once a year the worst! On no account should money be kept, or even banked for a whole twelve-month. In very small Schools once a quarter may be the rule but prompt payments all round mean a lessened bill at the Mission House for interest on borrowed money.

The Missionary Society allows the local au-

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thorities to deduct for "rewards" five per cent. on all amounts raised by Christmas Offerings and Juvenile Associations (nothing should be deducted for 'adult' boxes). This money is usually spent in purchasing missionary books as prizes, which are small or large according to the amount collected. The W.M.M.S. is the only one of the large Missionary Societies to adopt such an *ad valorem* system of rewarding the services of young people, at a total cost of close on a thousand pounds. One other of the Societies gives a reward for all collectors raising a certain sum, but it is the same book no matter how large the sum and a new book is provided by their Mission House each year.

Strong views are held as to the wisdom and necessity or otherwise of the present system. An increasing number of Schools is finding it much more satisfactory in every way to abandon the principle of a "reward" for work done for missions, and the results have not been adversely affected—in fact, the reverse has happened. The principle of *recognition* however is an altogether sound one, and the certificates and medals supplied gratis by the Mission House are in constant demand and are greatly valued by boys and girls.

Challenge shields and banners for the Schools of a district or circuit, or the classes of a School have also been found to be useful forms of recognition.

The whole question of rewards is one which is left entirely to the local Sunday School

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Councils and circuit missionary committees to decide. The pros and cons of the question should be carefully considered, and one School can often show the whole circuit what may be done by teaching children to work for missions, for the sake of the cause and the Master of all, leaving out of count altogether any question of personal reward.

One further word on this subject. If rewards are given up, then it is best to go the whole hog and to abandon them altogether. In some places a fictitious income has been created by adding to the collector's book the cost of the prize that he was entitled to, or by devoting it to some other missionary purpose. Deductions are allowable for *rewards* only, and if nothing is required for that purpose, then no deduction should be made. The amount expended in this connection throughout the whole Church is gradually decreasing, and there are many who hope that before long it will disappear altogether from the Society's accounts.

It should be the ambition of every juvenile secretary to attend a Missionary Summer School. It is a gathering of those who are engaged in missionary work among young people, all kinds of practical demonstrations are given by experts, and hundreds of secretaries have found their work twice as easy and ten times more interesting as the result of a week in the helpful atmosphere of Swanwick or Ashover..

In the Villages

IV

IN THE VILLAGES

"You don't need to live in a big place to do big things."

It would be an interesting task to compile a roll of the missionaries who have come from village Methodism. It would also be an interesting and instructive task to ascertain how many missionary enthusiasts, in town as well as in country, received their first impulse towards missionary work in a village missionary meeting. It would also be a revelation to some to know how very considerable a portion of our missionary income to-day is in the aggregate derived from the village missionary anniversary, and boxes in village homes.

The circuit missionary secretaries will begrudge no pains that they take with the annual missionary campaign in the villages. Problems of "when," and "whom," and "how" will well repay careful study.

First of all it is of the utmost importance that there should be a missionary secretary in every village to circulate the magazines, distribute the Christmas Offering cards, and arrange the local details of the anniversary. It is not essential that one more office should be added to the numerous responsibilities of some already busy worker. It is quite a good thing to get hold of

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some young man, it is often a better thing to secure the help of a young woman, who has time and energy to give to this particular piece of work.

“Years ago in a political campaign I learnt the value of having someone upon whom I could absolutely rely in every town, village and hamlet of the constituency for which I was agent. To-day I am equally convinced of the value of having a man or woman I can ‘tie to’ working for missions in every place in this circuit, and I like to catch ‘em young.” This bit of experience on the part of a vigorous veteran would be endorsed by many.

A tactful minister contributes the following word of advice. “Never ram a missionary anniversary down the throats of the people on the spot. Consult them, and so carry them with you. Every year I issue a circular letter asking each village secretary to make suggestions as to the hour and the day of the week on which the meeting should be held, the speakers and chairman they would like to have, and whether they can arrange for the children to give the report in dialogue fashion. I act on the suggestions they make as far as possible, and I find that I never get the villagers themselves holding aloof from an event because they have had no say in arranging it.”

“Every year a new idea,” urges another secretary. “Costumes, curios, diagrams, lantern, cinematograph, children’s choir, missionary dialogues, messages from the field by post boys in costume—each is made to serve its turn and there

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are many variations in each case. Of course there are difficulties to be overcome, but that's what difficulties are for. I have sometimes got three or four of the older girls in a village cause to give the description of a set of curios, putting the lecture into their hands a week before the meeting, and bringing the curios myself on the actual day. A real idol never fails to attract attention. Several times when we have used costumes the small hiring fee has been furnished by the children who wear them."

A West-country worker has made a new discovery. "I get a lady to go to each of our village meetings as a missionary story-teller. There is plenty of material available and I have had no difficulty in getting helpers. No item is more appreciated than this novelty, and in each case I have been asked to repeat it next year."

A dead set is being made at the old tradition that missionary meetings must be held at a time of the year when the days are shortest and the weather usually at its worst. A few circuits have pioneered the movement for summer meetings, and gradually the idea is spreading, and village meetings are being moved back from mid-winter to the late summer or early autumn with immensely satisfactory results.

"We combined our village missionary meetings with summer rallies of our town Guilds, and it is a moot point whether visitors or visited enjoyed the fixtures most. Wagonettes, cycles, motors, and "shanks' pony" were all requisitioned for the occasion."

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“I’m all for ‘daylight saving’ in our village missionary meetings; we did not need to light a single lamp at any of our chapels this year.”

“No more missionary drives in November fogs or December snows in this circuit, thank you! The wonder is that we never thought of this change before.”

These are a few extracts from letters we have received during the last year or two on this subject.

When circumstances allow, the delightful custom of the Yorkshire villages is worthy of wide adoption. All the homes of those connected with a village cause are thrown open on the day of the missionary meeting. Personal friends are invited and a hearty welcome given to interested visitors from the city. It is a festival in the home as well as in the little Church, and an enthusiastic meeting follows. In other places a missionary tea or a missionary supper supplies a welcome social element, and if the provisions are given, as is usually the case, an appreciable sum is added to the financial proceeds of the anniversary.

The best method of advertising the village meeting needs to be studied. Something better than a bald bill can usually be devised. Attractive folders, as well as pictorial posters and skeleton bills, can be obtained at a minimum cost from the Mission House.

An old campaigner declares, “You can keep all your old window bills. When I want to announce a missionary meeting and to get everybody there, I like to print my own little

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circular in my own way. I always get the children to do something in the meeting, and I make them my publicity agents."

The point is to find out what is the best plan and to have variety in even the best.

The Sunday sermons at most village anniversaries are usually taken by local preachers. Where literature would be welcomed it would be well to supply it. (See Chapter XI.)

"At our weekly prayer-meeting in the town-chapel we always remember the village anniversaries of the coming week, and preachers and speakers say they can feel the difference." That is the kind of missionary method we like to hear about.

Missionary boxes; useful everywhere, are specially suitable for use in the villages. If it is humanly possible, and it generally is, they should be opened at intervals during the year, and one of the occasions should be an hour or so before the meeting. One of the results of every meeting in town or country should be the issue of new boxes. If the boxes can be placed on the rostrum or pulpit in full view of the audience during the meeting the power of suggestion may prove a valuable force.

One secretary, who says he uses every help the Mission House brings out, is particularly enthusiastic about the new Circuit Officers' loose-leaf cash book. He writes:—"At the beginning of the campaign I fill up one of the sheets for every chapel, the left-hand side serves as the report on last year's work and the right-hand

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side when completed at the meeting as a report up to date. I find that this greatly simplifies our book-keeping and at the end of the year these sheets, which I carefully preserve, halve the work of preparing the annual schedules."

The report in dialogue form (a new one is prepared each year) is just the thing for a village missionary meeting. It is usually a far greater attraction to use the services of the children on the spot than to import children for this purpose from some other part of the circuit. Efficient training is essential.

The references to the report at an annual meeting in Chapter V apply with equal force to gatherings in town and village.

It is a good plan to round up all magic lanterns in the circuit for missionary service. There are often more lanterns and lanternists available than the secretary imagines. Despite the advent of the picture palace the lantern, though perhaps "magic" no longer, is by no means a spent force, especially in the villages. When the lantern is used at a meeting, a few slides of circuit or local interest will always be appreciated. Good use can be made of the blank slides, easily procurable, on which topical local announcements can be written by hand.

Missionary trading, referred to in Chapter IX, can often be introduced at a village anniversary, and reference to the picturesque methods employed in many places (missionary hens, missionary apple-trees, missionary potatoes, etc., as detailed in the pamphlet "Love's Ingenuity")

In the Villages

will often induce someone on the spot to do likewise.

The Helpers' Union in all its simple usefulness should be brought to the notice of those present at the meetings, and an effort should be made to extend the already wide circle of 'Foreign Field' readers. Any trouble involved in taking one or two missionary volumes for circulation among the young people would be well repaid. In the villages there is often more time for reading than material available.

Everybody knows the difficulties that many country superintendents, alas, have to complete the circuit plan. A Conference representative was telling some of his friends that, though not a local preacher, he had made himself responsible for filling a number of appointments in the villages of his circuit during each quarter. He had selected a suitable juvenile missionary programme, had arranged that a party of boys and girls should be trained to give the various items reverently and impressively, and had himself conveyed the party to the villages Sunday after Sunday. These appointments were greatly appreciated in the villages, and provided missionary "sermons" which made a deep impression.

Our statesmen will be giving increasing attention to the problems of rural life in the near future, and missionary workers, even if they do not lay claim to so big a thing as statesmanship, will also be wise to give increased attention to the problems and opportunities of missionary work in village Methodism.

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V

IN THE ANNIVERSARY

"A missionary campaign planned in a hurry is rarely a success."

A MISSIONARY anniversary can be a deadly dull affair, or it can be a week-end of thrilling interest. As in most other things, people get out what they put in. It is a calamity, not only for the Missionary Society, but for the local Church itself, when the annual gatherings in connection with the greatest and most romantic work of Methodism are mere commonplace occasions. Happily the number is steadily growing of places and people grudging no effort to make the missionary anniversary worthy of the cause it celebrates.

Probably the best plan to adopt in dealing with this subject is to print a number of paragraphs from various correspondents who have recently written to us at the Mission House.

"The missionary anniversary should be one of the three great events of the year, it should rival the Church and Sunday School anniversaries in interest, and outrival them in inspiration and result. The greatness and the urgency of the task should be the means of great spiritual uplift for the Church itself."

In the Anniversary

It is well to plan as if everything depended on planning, and then to pray and to pray and to *pray* as if everything depended on prayer.

It has been urged that the minister of every Church should take his own missionary anniversary at least once in his three years. If, however, preachers or speakers are sought from outside the circuit, these should be approached in good time.

The names of missionaries on furlough can always be obtained from the Mission House, and also a list of ex-missionaries now in home circuits. The missionary secretary who has a series of meetings to arrange in his circuit will also do well to ascertain from the district secretary what ladies or gentlemen in the district are willing to help in missionary advocacy. The resources of the circuit itself with regard to speakers, and all Methodist vehicles and motor cars, will of course be used to the fullest possible extent.

“Before the anniversary there must be careful and thorough preparation—a meeting is made or marred weeks before it is actually held.”

A returned missionary writes:—

“I have conducted over a hundred missionary anniversaries since my return from the mission field and, to be quite frank, some of them gave no evidence of any organisation at all beyond the mere printing of some very conventional posters and the procuring of a chairman. These anniversaries were never planned, they just happened! Such indolence or laxity spells

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failure so far as the gathering of an audience is concerned. On the other hand I have spoken at meetings that have gone with a swing from start to finish, and it was not difficult to discover how carefully the whole affair had been arranged. In my opinion there is no danger of spoiling a meeting by over-organisation, provided the right spirit prevails and local conditions are considered. To local secretaries I would say: plan prayerfully, carefully, and always avoid the stereotyped.

“Have an early meeting of your committee, lay the whole of a carefully-prepared scheme before them, let it be freely discussed, and let it be seen that you are open to receive suggestions. Your object is to enlist the entire force of the Church in the interests of the anniversary, and the best way to do this is to go for an ‘all-in’ policy at the anniversary—Guilds, Brotherhoods, Scouts, Mothers’ Meeting, etc. See that each contributes something in prayer, service and sacrifice. Map out your work so that each feature of the anniversary becomes the care of certain individuals, e.g. tea committee, canvassing committee, children’s committee, and so on. Remember all work of this kind is divine service.

“Send a full notice of the series of meetings to the circuit magazine. Let folk know something about the deputation before he comes. State your aims and appeal for active sympathy and prayer. Secure a message for the magazine from the chairman and deputation. Your main business during the weeks prior to the anni-

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versary is to awaken and sustain interest—the anniversary is to be a climax.

“An attractive leaflet should be prepared. Blocks to illustrate it can be borrowed from the H.O. Department. Print announcements that everybody will want to read. It is not necessary to be at great expense to secure this end.

“By far the most effective and the most economical way to secure a worthy audience at the missionary meeting is to adopt the canvass card system. We did not want our attendance governed by the state of the weather on one particular night, so we used the cards supplied gratis by the Mission House, and two missionary books were added to the Sunday School library as having been won for that institution by the most successful canvassers. One worker brought over a hundred people. Each canvasser was supplied with a ‘can’t be there bag’ into which people who were unable to come placed their contributions, the canvasser putting the bag on the collection plate at the meeting.

“Organise a bill-distributing brigade, always enclosing the selected literature in an envelope. A communication addressed personally is always more carefully considered than a pamphlet pushed into the letter-box or handed out at the Church doors. In one of my circuits a dozen young people turned up one evening at the Manse with fountain pens, and we folded and enclosed anniversary literature and addressed 1,000 envelopes in three hours.”

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Some vigorous advice on advertising given by a superintendent minister may fittingly be introduced here. "I'm not afraid to spend money on advertising. I have an idea that to spend 6*d.* to get 10*s.* 6*d.* is a net gain of ten shillings. Some men stick to their sixpences like the proverbial Scot. Bang go my 'sax-pences' and back come the half-guineas. Am I deluding myself by thinking that the ten shillings lying there are solid gain?"

Where the series of meetings include a children's gathering the issue a week beforehand in the Sunday School of special envelopes for their offerings will always help to advertise the meeting and incidentally considerably increase the collection.

Let the music of the anniversary be as carefully thought out as any other item. On Sunday the choir will doubtless be prepared to render some special service. Mr. J. A. Meale's *Missionary Fantasia* as given at the great Centenary Meeting in the Albert Hall deserves to be far more widely used than it has been yet. If the Church choir can attend in force at the week-night meeting that is a great advantage in every way and this is seldom difficult to arrange if the matter is properly put before them. Failing this, a junior choir from the School has often been arranged, sometimes using costumes from the Mission House. But, to quote an expert, "see that it *is* a choir in the real sense of the word and not a few children put up to sing with little or no training."

In the Anniversary

Another bit of personal experience may be quoted: "I usually preach a missionary sermon on the Sunday *previous* to the missionary anniversary. This stirs up interest and prepares the way for the deputation, and leads to an increase in the congregation and in the collection on the following week.

"Missionary mottoes in large letters, made by the young people or borrowed from the Mission House, are often hung around the Church to mark the special occasion.

"We always have stewards wearing special badges at the doors to welcome strangers to our missionary meeting. These stewards promise to come twenty minutes before and not five minutes after the meeting begins.

"We have three small tables in the vestibule, one for 'The Foreign Field,' another with Helpers' Union booklets, and the third with a stock of boxes.

"With a view to arousing special interest among the young people, prizes (missionary books) are often offered for the best description of the anniversary or of the meeting, the best paper being reprinted in the circuit magazine. It will often be illuminating to the deputation if he acts as judge!"

Yet another suggestion is given by the same minister. "I have often received valuable help from the press. Our leading local paper here is always willing to insert a large missionary photographic block on its centre page on the day of our meeting, and I keep them going with

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paragraphs beforehand." This same correspondent breaks out in conclusion, "Experience will constantly suggest fresh ideas in preparing for the anniversary. We reap as we sow. Sloppy, slovenly preparation dishonours God, discredits the Church and gets what it deserves—failure. There isn't a Methodist Church large or small from Land's End to John o' Groats where the anniversary cannot be made a triumphant success—the building filled with people, and the people filled with enthusiasm, because the gathering is charged with spiritual power."

As to the programme of the anniversary week-end one of our correspondents quoted above suggests the following :

Saturday evening.

Prayer Meeting and introduction of the deputation to the missionary workers old and young who have been specially invited to meet him.

Sunday.

The usual services, morning and evening. Children's service and Brotherhood missionary meeting in the afternoon. Missionary Prayer Meeting at the close of the evening service.

Monday.

Sermon in the afternoon, followed by a tea or "At Home" at which there should be ample opportunities for friend or critic to ask questions on missionary topics.

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In a well-known central London chapel, a more than usually dainty tea was provided a year or two ago, for which of course visitors paid. Later it transpired that the tea was given entirely by the young people of the school and congregation. They were invited to coax from their parents and friends cakes, buns, and loaves for the missionary tea, and they succeeded beyond all expectation. Incidentally, this gave the gathering a valuable advertisement. This simple plan might be adopted in many places, and a little forethought will obviate the danger of too great a duplication of any one article.

Another secretary ensured success beforehand by arranging for ten ladies to sell ten tickets for a missionary tea, each of the ten undertaking to provide for ten of the visitors.

It is difficult to compress into reasonable limits the things one would like to say about the missionary meeting. We are offered this advice from one who has had more experience than most.

“Have a platform at your meeting, if at all possible. Arrange to have the chairman and deputation supported by representatives of various Church departments and by missionary workers. The platform should emphasise the truth that the missionary work is not a ‘side show’ but a central feature of the Church’s life.”

Begin the meeting on the stroke of the clock. The biggest annual missionary meeting in Methodism, perhaps the biggest annual missionary meeting in the world, the great Metho-

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dist gathering at the Albert Hall, usually begins a few minutes *before time*. Never for twelve years has it started a single minute after the advertised hour.

A model programme has been drawn up by one who has had wide experience as a missionary on furlough, a Conference deputation, a district secretary and a local circuit organiser. It would perhaps be an advantage if anything could be done to shorten the time devoted to the items previous to the deputation's address.

Hymn	.	.	.	.	.	5 mins.
Scripture	.	.	.	.	.	8 „

There should be no missionary meeting without this. It is not a mere public meeting, but an act of worship.

Prayer	.	.	.	.	.	5 mins.
Anthem or solo	5 „

This enlists the sympathy of the choir.

Introduction of Chairman	.	.	1 min.
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Avoid flattery. The chairman is honoured in being associated with Christ's work.

Reports	10 mins.
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(a) General. By circuit secretary

(b) Local. By local secretary

The statement of local income should not be ancient history but brought right up to date, and it is a fairly safe rule for the secretary only to give such figures as he can himself remember. As a rule other means can be taken to acknowledge gifts in detail than that of occupying the valuable time of the annual missionary meeting.

Some men have the happy art of making figures live and so presenting the facts of the year as to produce a great inspiration and to make a strong appeal.

In the Anniversary

Chairman's address . . . 10 mins.

Hymn . . . 5 „

Always get the congregation on its feet before an address.

Deputation . . . 40 mins.

Conserve the time in every way, so that the deputation may be able to deliver his message effectively. The missionary speech should be informing, instructive and kindling.

Silent prayer for missionary consecration . . . 2 mins.

Collection . . . 5 „

By selected plate-holders, or possibly by missionary collectors in costume.

Young people's item . . . 10 mins.

Such as a march past of missionary standard-bearers, etc. See "H.O.D. Catalogue."

Appeal on behalf of "Foreign Field"
 —new subscribers — boxholders
 — collectors — Helpers' Union
 and mission study . . . 5 mins.

The enthusiasm of the meeting must be captured for some definite form of missionary service or the meeting may be a failure. The meeting is the beginning of a new endeavour.

Announce result of the collection . 2 mins.

Hymn . . . 3 „

Benediction . . . 1 „

Let the secretaries of various departments be

ready at the door to supply boxes, collecting books, specimen copies of "Foreign Field."

When the meeting is over there yet remain missionary opportunities. A well-known home missionary, formerly a West African missionary, writes as follows:—

"After the meeting about fourteen young people were invited to meet me at the supper table, and for about an hour I was subjected to a furious and incessant bombardment from every side. No quarter was given and none asked. It was a most delightful experience, and I verily believe that I did more good by this supper table catechism than at any of the services I took. Let hosts and hostesses throughout the Connexion arrange with their missionary deputations for an opportunity of this kind. The experiment will be productive of nothing but good."

The securing of income has a legitimate place in a missionary anniversary. A money gift is to many the only outward and visible pledge possible of their personal interest, and it becomes a sacramental token of their love to the cause.

The use of "can't be there" bags and special envelopes for gifts has often very greatly increased the collections. Both these aids can be obtained gratis from the Mission House.

"Medical missions flag day" is now frequently made a feature of the missionary meeting. The flags are supplied by the Mission House at a trifling cost, the proceeds helping to swell the

income of the anniversary. Button - holes, bunches of country flowers, baskets of blackberries have also contributed many shillings and pence to various country missionary anniversaries.

Sometimes for a large circuit there is difficulty in securing chairmen for the missionary meetings. One generous and devoted friend in the West Country gives the following advice:—“Sketch out your missionary campaign to the Quarterly Meeting which precedes it; at an early stage tell the members something of your hopes and plans, and appeal on the highest possible grounds for support in prayer, personal service and finance. Announce your intention to approach members of the meeting there and then with a view to securing chairmen at the various meetings. A few whispered conversations during the next half-hour will probably yield more satisfactory results than a whole day of letter-writing or of personal calls. Friends not present can be kept in reserve for unexpected vacancies.”

Another plan for securing chairmen for meetings has been evolved from the fruitful brain of a lay secretary in the North of England and has been widely adopted elsewhere. He found it difficult to secure chairmen for his central meeting year after year who would sustain all the duties of the office, and whose gifts to the cause would be both substantial and uniform. He hit upon the happy idea of forming a syndicate for the purpose and he had no difficulty whatever in securing ten gentlemen who promised to give

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one guinea each year for ten years and to take the chair in rotation. He has applied this same idea with equal success to the smaller places in his circuit, and half-sovereigns and half-crowns are readily given by a large number of sympathisers year after year. All the members of the little syndicates thus formed often make it their special business to be present year after year at the particular anniversary in which they are interested. This ensures that the giving from the chairman shall be on a satisfactory basis for a series of years, and it enables the secretary to invite many men to occupy an honourable position and to help in the advocacy of missions who otherwise would never have been thought of in that connection.

Another secretary has often made a Society Class or a senior class in the Sunday School collectively responsible for filling the chair of a missionary meeting. They provide between them the usual chairman's gift, they nominate one of their number to preside, they furnish one or two speakers, a soloist, a reader of the lesson, and the whole class rallies to the support of that particular meeting.

The important principle of self-help however should be inculcated in missionary meetings large or small. The contribution of the chairman is usually looked upon as an asset in any anniversary, but it is a vicious custom when the giving is left to him entirely; that is a privilege which should be shared by both pew and platform.

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While every legitimate effort should be made to secure the maximum financial result from a missionary anniversary it should never be considered or used only as a financial effort, or its value measured solely by the collection. There have been meetings which have resulted in only a poor collection at the time, but they have led to personal consecration and active service which has afterwards been fruitful in many ways.

We have heard of successful missionary meetings being held, under exceptional circumstances, after a Sunday evening service. The extension of this practice however should be watched very jealously.

On the other hand, another new departure of recent years is so thoroughly good that it can be unhesitatingly recommended for wider adoption, and that is the "circuit missionary week." This plan is specially suitable for a compact circuit, and has been adopted in several London areas. The services of a missionary have been secured for the whole of the week or ten days. The meetings have been arranged in the various Churches for consecutive nights, and while each address has been complete in itself, it has been a part of a larger whole. "The winning of India" and "China's awakening" are two subjects which have been treated in this way. One circular suffices for the whole series of meetings and on it is printed a syllabus of each address. In one circuit such a "week" began with a social hour before the first meeting, it included an afternoon gathering in the interests

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of the Women's Auxiliary, and it concluded with a conference which was a triumphant climax. In another circuit "Africa" was the topic and both senior and junior study circles were held in anticipation of the missionary's visit. It is significant that every circuit that has adopted this plan during recent years has continued it.

"Let the end of your anniversary be a new beginning. As soon as the meetings are over call the committee together to consider results and to plan how to do better still another year. See that every offer of missionary service is followed up, and that no box applicant is overlooked and no possible collector, adult or juvenile, left uncommissioned. Let your workers know the results that have been attained, and acquaint them with the fact that the money has been remitted to the district treasurer. Do not stint appreciation of work that has been well done. One further hint. Having had a good innings let the missionary worker cheerfully give place to others who may also be planning big things for their special departments and let him render every assistance in his power."

In our planning for the anniversary let us not lose sight of one possible result. Such occasions have brought to many the clear call of God to the mission field. The missionary secretary will do well to mark the response of face and eye among the young people, and, guided by much prayer and much tact, unhurriedly to seek to harvest those results from the missionary anniversary which are most valuable of all.

In Summer Time

VI

IN SUMMER TIME

"There is no 'off-time' for missions."

REFERENCE has been made in a previous chapter to holding village missionary meetings during the summer instead of in the winter.

In addition to this it is usually possible to hold some kind of summer gathering in connection with a town Church. Sometimes the ground surrounding the Church itself can be made suitable for the purpose. As a rule there is some one with a garden and a heart large enough to accommodate a few score of people, or perhaps two or three hundred according to the number that may be expected to gather for the occasion. A field, or a tennis court on the outskirts of the town, may be equally suitable. In fact the quite small garden, just large enough to hold a dozen or two neighbours and friends, may be made to play its part in matters missionary.

Some careful thought must be given to the programme, and the possibilities of making it really a *missionary* meeting should be fully explored.

An experienced missionary worker put some

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suggestions under this head on a "half sheet of notepaper" with the following result:—

"1. Give your gathering a distinctive name. Why not Tamasha (an Indian term for a festive gathering)?"

2. Select your date early and let everybody know it.

3. Get the best available garden or field.

4. Think out carefully alternative arrangements for a wet-weather programme.

5. Provide tea and sell tickets beforehand to prevent waste and loss.

6. Arrange a programme full of missionary interest and education for every minute available. Keep strictly to your time-table. Consider how many of the following items you can include: six six-minute talks, living map of India, costume recitals by children, representation or tableaux by senior scholars, curio talks, music by Brotherhood Band, postcard stall, Mission House 'helps' stall, missionary general knowledge competition, missionary market, 'white elephant' stall, medical mission flag day."

Into these six suggestions is crowded a wealth of possibility. It is unnecessary to do more than mention these points. If further information is wanted concerning any of them a postcard to the Mission House will bring the required details.

A great Methodist mission in the North has for several years held a "missionary day" in midsummer. With the pressure of economic

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conditions it was felt that many would be left out if the planning were for a day only and the idea grew into a missionary "week." Condensing a most interesting report we can outline the scheme thus :—

"A cyclostyled letter was sent to every class-leader, Sunday School worker, open-air speaker and anyone else taking part in any of the regular meetings of the mission, asking that all meetings in that week should be made *missionary* meetings.

"A small local missionary library was got together and the books available were referred to in the letter.

"As a full programme was to be printed, a reply was asked for, giving particulars as to any special speakers, lady presidents, chairmen. In some cases classes met together and invited a returned missionary to address them. The various departments of the Sunday School had open missionary sessions, in one case using the lantern, the provision for darkening the windows making this possible on a summer afternoon.

"Coupon collecting books,* containing receipts for 1s., 6d. and 3d., and perforated cards,* containing coupons for 3d., 2d. and 1d., were issued in advance to the young people, and a cyclo-styled label pasted on the front localised these in connection with the 'week.' An opportunity for the large Sunday night congregation to take part was provided by placing in the pews

* Obtainable from the Mission House.

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the small envelopes supplied by the Mission House—‘my best for Jesu’s sake’—adequate announcement and appeal being made by the superintendent.

“The last day of the seven opened with a six o’clock prayer meeting conducted by the super with a returned Chinese missionary as speaker. This was followed by a seven o’clock breakfast with a talk over the tables. Some were able to slip in for the usual noon prayer meeting, others for the afternoon Class Meeting and missionary gathering, but the majority had to be content with the evening meeting. An hour before this began the minister and secretary were there as advertised, to receive collecting-books and gifts. After the meeting there was a missionary supper, bringing the total number of missionary meetings of the week up to fifty-four, most of them of course the ordinary meetings of the week missionary-ised. During supper new homes were found for missionary boxes, new regular subscribers obtained for the ‘Foreign Field.’ No wonder that all went home from the last meeting with the doxology ringing in their ears, and no wonder that the thousand shillings aimed at were paid in to the treasurer the following morning.”

The summer affords an admirable time for a rally of missionary workers for the whole or part of a district. On such an occasion the district treasurer, or some other missionary leader in the district, often provides hospitality and invitations are usually addressed personally to

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the invited guests. With a suitable programme such a gathering can be made most useful to the secretaries and collectors from the several circuits of a large town or the villages round a smaller one. Wise are the organisers when they allow some space in the programme of such a gathering for sunshine and fresh air to do their beneficent work.

The possibilities of combining missionary business with very innocent and very real pleasure in a summer circuit gathering in some central village are indeed endless.

"All that is needed," declares a secretary in the South of England, "is a little trouble in looking up conveyances, and securing passengers. The villages are usually only too pleased to exchange the winter meeting for a summer one, or better still to make the summer gathering supplementary to the winter one. Of course you must steer clear of haymaking and harvest, and it is well to choose an early-closing day. Many of our young people, hard at it during the rest of the week, are then on the look out for an excursion, and can easily be persuaded to turn their holiday-making to the benefit of a worthy cause. What townsfolk do not love a country drive and tea at a country homestead? And what Methodist farmer would not be only too willing to lend his barns for the tea and his lawn for the meeting? The free air and the broad sky seem so much in harmony with the freedom and breadth of the missionary appeal."

To quote one other worker on the same sub-

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ject, "The best kind of missionary meeting is the summer missionary meeting, and the more unlike a missionary meeting it is the better missionary meeting it will be. This is entirely without prejudice to the ordinary missionary meeting so called for this occasion only. Your chief features will be a fine summer day, a newly mown hay-field, and the shade of some fine trees, a setting as far removed from a chapel and a cold winter's evening as possible.

"Our circuit has now borrowed the missionary meeting at the picturesque picnic place of the circuit, and turned it into a 'circuit summer missionary festival.' The friends in that village cheerfully acquiesce in all the work involved in entertaining the whole circuit—no light matter—and on the other hand they reap all the advantages of having some four hundred guests at their missionary meeting.

"On these occasions you must arrange for two festivals though you only hold one—(a) for fine weather, (b) for wet—and it is so much the better if the arrangements for (a) can easily be made to do service for (b). The secret is a large tent; if it is fine you use it to fly flags from—if it is wet you do everything in it that you can't do in the chapel.

"The question of finances under wet-weather conditions wants to be faced beforehand. It may sometimes be a wise precaution to have a small guarantee fund to be drawn upon if necessary.

"As to the programme, the great thing is to

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have something going on all the time and nothing for long. We had costume pieces by juvenile collectors; speakers prepared with short breezy addresses; secretarial reports in tabloid form; singing by one of our choirs which has won considerable fame in choral contests; native songs, genuine at any rate in that they were sung from inside native costumes; tea which could be taken indoors or out of doors or tent-wise. The touch of colour added by the costumes was fascinating in the sunlight.

“When the time for the evening meeting came everybody was tuned up to the true pitch of missionary enthusiasm, and ready for the fine address that followed.”

A considerably increased income is only one of the good results that follow from such a gathering. There are circuits that scatter in this fashion, and it is happily true that thereby they also increase.

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VII IN EDUCATION

"The thorough education of the members of the Church as to Christ's world-wide programme is essential to their highest development. There is no subject more broadening, more deepening, more elevating, and more inspiring than this great theme."

THE chief secret of true missionary success may be expressed in one word—knowledge.

The Laymen's Movement stands for missionary education, as do the Swanwick Summer School, the study circle, the lending library, the missionary lesson in the Sunday School, and an ever fresh supply of missionary text-books. All these agencies have contributed to the missionary triumphs of recent years in home Methodism, and they furnish a guarantee for years to come.

The Missionary Society has no desire to snatch the money that is needed year by year from the reluctant hand of an uninformed Church, but rather to call the whole Church into a fellowship of knowledge of the work, and into the joy of sacrificial service. We are not raising mushrooms, we are planting vines—guaranteeing the future while we serve the present. Our aim is to seek access to the Church

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through every avenue of instruction and information and we cannot rest until we have reached and enlisted every adult member and every child in the service of God for the saving of the world.

Missionary education from the pulpit is a theme too large to enter upon here. All that can be said on this subject to either the ordained minister or the local preacher is to be found in that valuable volume "The Home Ministry and Modern Missions," by John R. Mott.

One great missionary leader has stated that "the weak spot in missions to-day is not in the field, nor in home administration, nor in the pews, but in the pulpit." "If a man can only preach on missions once a year, he had better not preach on missions at all," declares another.

During the last few years the "Ministers' Missionary Union" of our own Methodist Church has done much to bring and to keep this important obligation before our ministers, and with increasingly successful results. Special references to the missionary services that can be rendered by local preachers will be found in Chapter XI, and similarly many suggestions are given in other sections as to missionary education in the Class Meeting, in the Sunday School, and other departments of our Church life.

Practically every department of the Church affords abundant opportunity for work of this kind. It may be well to consider some of them in detail.

The most valuable method of all is un-

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doubtedly the missionary study circle. We are of course quite willing to admit that there are in many places considerable difficulties in the way of arranging for these, but it is supremely worth while to take any amount of trouble to get a circle formed.

The method is for half-a-dozen people, or any larger number up to say ten, to agree to study a selected missionary text-book, copies of which are bought by all. On a certain evening they meet for not less than an hour in a chapel vestry, or, better still, in a private house. All have read carefully beforehand one chapter of the book, keeping in view certain points agreed upon with the leader at the previous meeting. The success or otherwise of a study circle largely depends upon the leader, not that he or she must necessarily be a great authority on missionary matters, but it is essential that a leader should have a genuine interest in missions, the ability to "chair" a discussion, and lead it—not drive it—to a useful end, and the gift of drawing out the members of the circle so that all will contribute to the conversation evening by evening.

As a rule the text-books contain six or eight chapters and sometimes a preliminary meeting and a final meeting are also held. There are standard text-books now on all the great missionary fields, and most of the great missionary topics, and these are graded in such a way that we are able to provide suitable literature for a study circle of undergraduates or for the less favoured half-dozen country folk who may,

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with equally useful results, be induced to devote eight or ten evenings in as many consecutive weeks to a missionary study circle.

It may at first seem a big expenditure of time and thought for a very small result. But those who have tried know that absolutely nothing in the whole round of missionary activities is so productive as this intensive method of the mission study circle.

In support of this let the following opinions speak for themselves.

“I find that we get the best results out of a missionary study class by gathering together the missionary officials of the church: the box, book, and juvenile secretaries, senior collectors, etc. It is of the greatest importance that the people who are doing the work should be both intelligent and enthusiastic missionary workers.”

“Before we had a study circle our people knew nothing about missions—now they have found out that missions are the one thing most worth knowing about.”

“Appeal to a few friends to meet with you, the self-appointed leader, to study a missionary book. Guarantee them an interesting time, not because of the leader but because of the theme. Pray for a response to your appeal. If you are busy so much the better, use that as an argument. Fix on a time when they could come if they would. If four of them will come at eight o'clock on a Sunday morning it is much better than twice the number on Sunday afternoon after school. The former will cost something

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and success is greatly helped thereby. At the last meeting decide on prayer-plans for members of the circle, and discuss what practical steps can be taken to secure the spiritual and missionary awakening of the Church."

"Find your study circle leader and give him or her a free hand. Do not make your first circle a large one. Four or five members meeting in the leader's own house will produce better results than a larger meeting held elsewhere but with an irregular attendance. It should be your aim to make the members of one study circle the leaders of another."

"Mission study is worth while. It stimulates mentally, it deepens spiritually, and it leads to definite service. It is the one key that will unlock the five doors of information, interest, prayer, money and workers."

Society Classes have often turned themselves into missionary study circles for a couple of months, Wesley Guilds have often arranged for a study circle from among the keenest of their members, and sometimes a senior Sunday School class has adopted or adapted the idea. People can usually find both time and place to do anything that they really want to do—and this is true when a few young folk, or older too for that matter, are bent on having a mission study circle.

The junior study circle is, in its own way, just as valuable an educational agency. In this case there is no text-book in the hands of the children but the leader uses, as a rule, one of the series of "Talks" and keeps the children

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busy with the various forms of expression-work suggested therein. Six or seven weeks usually suffice for a junior circle, and in the Junior Society Class, the Band of Hope, as well as among juvenile collectors there is abundant scope for the establishment of such an agency.

We have the material—simple, cheap, effective. You have the boys and girls—with life throbbing through body and brain, with imaginations most gloriously active, and with minds not yet hide-bound by conventionalities. Who for the sake of the Kingdom will equip themselves with the material and consecrate the necessary time so that junior study circles may be started in every corner of the land?

Helpful pamphlet literature on these important subjects, and still more helpful personal direction of both senior and junior study work, will gladly be provided by the Mission Study Department of the Mission House.

After oral methods of imparting missionary education comes that other great agency, the printed page. The missionary magazine is the readiest agency in our hands in this connection. There need be no apology for referring to the circulation of the missionary magazine under the head of education. There are hundreds of Methodists, young and old, who have had their missionary interests awakened by reading "The Foreign Field" and "At Home and Abroad," and many hundreds more who have had their sympathies deepened and sustained in the same way.

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“The Foreign Field” is sold by honorary agents in every circuit at a penny net; no discount is granted; parcels are sent out towards the end of each month, carriage paid. It obviously saves considerable expense if there is only one parcel for a circuit. Where, however, it is a great advantage to have more than one parcel sent to any one circuit, this can be arranged, provided that the order for the second parcel is for not less than twenty-five copies. Upon smaller quantities, if sent direct and not in the monthly missionary parcel, carriage is charged—thereby increasing the cost of the magazine to the purchaser. Quarterly accounts are rendered by the Mission House, and prompt payment is expected. It is not desired that agents should be out-of-pocket by so kindly undertaking this work, so any reasonable expenses incurred, and the cost of any unsold copies (if the order for the following month is reduced) are allowed for when the account is settled.

“At Home and Abroad” is supplied gratis, and is intended for juvenile collectors who raise ten shillings and upwards a year for missions, by box, book or card. Other children may have the magazine on payment of one halfpenny per month. Supplies of “At Home and Abroad” are sent with “The Foreign Field,” and the Mission House relies on its honorary agents to circulate “At Home and Abroad” to each of their Sunday Schools entitled to copies.

The “H.O.D. Magazine” is meant to reach

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every minister, every circuit secretary and treasurer, and all others who are actively at work for missions in the circuit; and a sufficient number is, or gladly will be, forwarded gratis in the monthly magazine parcel for this purpose. Here, again, the valuable services of the honorary "Foreign Field" agent are relied on. It can often be arranged that copies of the "H.O.D. Magazine" can be passed on, and if it is desired, it can be posted from London to any address for one shilling and sixpence a year.

The Missionary Society is fortunate in possessing such an efficient and enthusiastic body of helpers as its magazine agents. Their services have doubled the circulation of "The Foreign Field," and maintain the figure at a height considerably above that of any other missionary magazine in the country. Hints for the agent, letters for canvassing for new subscribers, note-books for recording names of subscribers, lobby cards, an advertisement on a lantern slide, removal advice forms, invoices, envelopes for the renewal of subscriptions together with back numbers for free distribution, can all be obtained free of charge from the Mission House. The following paragraphs are evidence of the good work the agents are doing.

"There is sound common-sense, if nothing heroic, in getting a new subscriber for every one that is lost."

"There is no cheap and easy way of getting and keeping a large circulation. Personal

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application to the prospective subscriber is the only way to do this."

"An occasional pulpit notice by the minister is distinctly helpful."

"The senior classes in the Sunday School provide a field well worth cultivating."

"Every now and then I deliberately over-order, which means that I must then increase my list of subscribers."

"No business, not even the simple one of selling a monthly penny magazine, will work by itself. Keep your eye on the finances of your honorary agency. I have known an agent get his accounts into a terrible mess, but that is quite unnecessary."

"I divide up my two hundred subscribers into seven rounds. Seven of the most reliable juvenile collectors have each a 'Foreign Field' note-book, in which are entered the names of about thirty subscribers. All I have to do each month is to prepare seven pilcs of the magazine, varying in size according to the number of each 'round,' and to put the name of the distributor on each. The children call automatically on the first Saturday in the month, and the whole thing works with surprising smoothness. I look after the matter of payment of subscriptions myself, and do not use my young helpers for that part of the business."

For several years a "Foreign Field" Prayer Meeting has been held in a London Church. On the first Sunday evening in the month at six o'clock, the young people there, having

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already read the current issue, meet in the vestry to pray over the needs and problems disclosed in the articles of the month. There are few more vigorous missionary centres anywhere than that suburban Church.

One agent induced his subscribers not only to buy the magazine, but to read it, by drawing up a series of comments and questions such as : "What would you have done if you had been the missionary referred to on page 96?" "You will find Yiyang clearly shown in the 'Helpers' Union Manual.'" "The writer of the article on Muhammadanism was once a local preacher in this circuit." These notes and queries were cyclostyled each month, and attached to each magazine and there was in that circuit abundant evidence that the copies circulated were read.

The missionary magazines of other Societies will also well repay study, and there are inter-denominational publications in England and America which are full of valuable material. It is a mistake for Methodists to think that they are doing all the missionary work in the world.

The missionary worker who is planning an educational campaign will do well to give a large place to missionary literature in the shape of books as well as magazines.

There are nowadays first-class missionary books for every type of reader. One topic discussed at a Swanwick conference was "Janet means to give missionary books as Christmas presents this year to :—Stanley, her *fiancé*, a

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young solicitor who imagines that politics are much more a man's job than missions; Jack, aged seven; Jane, aged twelve; Harold, who has just gone to business; Dorothea, the dilettante; Father, whose two big interests are his Class Meeting and his business; and Elizabeth the maid—if she stays till Christmas. Advise Janet what to get, and say why in each case.”

It was found that there was a book, in fact several books, for each member of this happy family. A post card to the Mission House will secure advice for any one who is contemplating following Janet's example.

A young minister has been doing some splendid educational work for missions by circulating books in his circuit. He writes:—"My people cannot afford to buy many books, so I came to the conclusion that they must be lent round. I arranged with the Mission House library in London to send me fifteen books a quarter. When setting off visiting I have taken a few in my hand, and introducing the subject of missions, have offered to lend one to the member called upon, until in about ten days all the fifteen volumes are in different homes for a month. I keep a list of the books and of the names of the friends holding them. They come back in different ways; some bring them to the services, when they are immediately handed on to some one else; others are called for, and left at the next house visited. In this way, each book is read on the average by three

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people in the quarter,—forty-five in all, and the process is repeated four times in the year.

“After bearing the expense myself the first year, I found the Sunday School Council quite willing to bear it the second.

“There is no reason why an enthusiastic layman should not do this in town or village, but a pastor who loves his work will find it a splendid opportunity for missionary conversation in the homes he visits, and conversation about foreign missionary work is conversation about vital and essential Christianity.”

Enough has been said to show that any missionary worker who does not seek to impart missionary education in one or other or many of the various ways in which it can be done is missing a golden opportunity.

“To generate real missionary enthusiasm an educational campaign is needed. It is impossible to create zeal for an object of which people are ignorant. The basis of all healthy enthusiasm is truth and sincerity. The zeal that endures and grows and achieves is according to knowledge.”

VIII

IN INTERCESSION

“Of all the forces God has placed at our disposal for winning the world for Christ, the greatest is that of prayer.”

It is with the greatest diffidence that the task is attempted of arranging the material which has been collected for this chapter.

Obviously no book dealing with missionary methods in the home Church would be complete without reference and very special reference to the place of prayer in our missionary activities.

The missionary worker who does not give the front place to prayer, first of all in his own life, and secondly in his plans and ambitions for circuit, Church or School, will never achieve the maximum of usefulness. Let us all be eager to learn from any writer or speaker, or any of God's saints whom He sends across our path, anything they can teach us concerning prayer. If courage is needed to make us insistent with others as well as with ourselves as to the rightful place of prayer in missionary work, then let us pray for that courage, and so win the first victory in a campaign of prayer.

Happily there is no lack of helpful literature on this all-important topic. Many of the best of these books are in our lending library at the

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Mission House, and a number of pamphlets can be secured for a few pence from the offices of the Student Christian Movement. Details of both will be sent on application to 24, Bishopsgate.

It is not proposed in this chapter to deal at length with the subject of private prayer for missions. That has been done far more helpfully than I can do it in the books and pamphlets to which reference has been made. The all-important matters of the Prayer Meeting and the Helpers' Union must, however, receive the most careful consideration of every missionary worker.

As long ago as 1815 the Conference recommended that wherever it could be made convenient, there should be a monthly missionary Prayer Meeting in every Methodist Society. The recommendation still stands. Alas that it is followed in so few instances!

But a missionary Prayer Meeting which is held chiefly because there is a Conference recommendation, or because it is appointed on the plan, is not likely to be a great missionary asset.

The finest combination of forces for the re-establishment of a missionary Prayer Meeting is a committee of two—the minister and somebody else. Some of the very best missionary Prayer Meetings we have heard of have grown out of an agreement in the first instance between “two or three” touching the affairs of the Kingdom.

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It is not too much to say that there has never yet been a live Prayer Meeting for missions, or for anything else, which has lacked people to attend it. It is the dead-and-alive kind of Prayer Meeting for which nobody has any enthusiasm. Why should they?

It was not long since that we heard this bit of experience. "We owe the revival of our missionary Prayer Meeting to our minister. He began by preaching a series of sermons on prayer; then he talked about prayer when he met the Classes for tickets; he gave an address on prayer at the Wesley Guild, and a lesson on the same subject to the four top classes in the Sunday School. Then we all received invitations to an inaugural Prayer Meeting in the Church parlour. When we arrived there was a cheerful fire, a vase of flowers, one of our girls at the piano softly playing a voluntary, the hymn numbers on a board borrowed from the choir, a soloist, a large home-made map on the wall, and a Bible on each chair. I have never before seen such trouble taken with the arrangements for a Prayer Meeting."

Isn't the secret of that success in the very last sentence? Why should one take less of care and trouble or exercise less forethought and imagination for a Prayer Meeting, than for, say, a Wesley Guild social or a harvest festival? Alas that so many Prayer Meetings just happen, nobody thinking for them beforehand and very few thinking of them afterwards. A writer on this subject says that on one occasion half an

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hour after a certain Prayer Meeting she asked those who had taken part to tell her what they had prayed for, and only one could indicate at all clearly what his petitions had been. Does that story make any of us feel uneasy ?

Why have a dull missionary Prayer Meeting, when there are all those ideas and suggestions of Miss Brain's to draw on set out so beautifully in the second chapter of " Holding the Ropes " ? It is unbelievable that in any town or village where there is any real spiritual life, a missionary Prayer Meeting will lapse if undertaken and carried on in the spirit of that most suggestive and helpful book.

Extracts from letters from the mission field and from missionary books and magazines ; diagrams, pictures, photographs, in short, anything that arrests the mind by its appeal to the eye, is helpful in the introductory period of a missionary Prayer Meeting.

Specimens reached the Mission House some time ago of a series of announcements of Prayer Meetings in a strong missionary church in the West of England. One evening the topic was India ; details of the time and place of the meeting and the name of the soloist were given inside an outline map of that great field. Attention had been arrested for another occasion by a diagram borrowed from Miss Guinness's " Across India." At other times announcement of the meeting was made in a few striking sentences from the pulpit, or by a large notice

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designed by one of the young people and hung in the lobby of the Church.

If prayer is the greatest missionary force, and we all believe it is, then no trouble should be too great to secure the maximum of attendance and interest at our missionary Prayer Meetings.

Attendance and interest, however, are but the preliminary to real power in prayer. On the day of Pentecost they were all with one accord in one place and then there came the gift of the Holy Spirit.

I wonder how many of those who read this chapter have sacred memories of some particular Prayer Meeting, perhaps at a time of revival in a local Church, or at a Summer School, a Fellowship "retreat" or some similar gathering; or it may be associated with some spirit-filled personality. Isn't it worth any amount of effort, first of all in some of the small things mentioned above, and secondly in personal preparation, to secure for your missionary Prayer Meeting a reproduction of the same atmosphere?

"Prayer that counts costs," and a Prayer Meeting that counts costs. Are we prepared to pay the cost? What name have we for ourselves if, acknowledging the truth of all this, we refuse to pay the cost? It may seem paradoxical, but it is often far harder to secure a really effective missionary Prayer Meeting than to double the missionary income, and yet the quickest way to double the missionary income and *more* is to secure—for its own sake mind you, not for any other thing that may come out of

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it—a missionary Prayer Meeting which is effective as God measures effectiveness.

Some time ago I was chatting with an official of the Church Missionary Society who asked me if I had ever noticed in their report the giving of one of their Colonial auxiliaries—near Cape-town in South Africa. A Church of fifty members of only average financial resources sends no less than £800 to Salisbury Square every year. One of the members of that Church was in London on one occasion and, as might be expected, called at the head quarters of the C.M.S. They asked him how it came about that so small a Church gave so large a sum to missions. His answer was to give a glowing account of a missionary Prayer Meeting held for two hours every week, the most carefully - prepared - for meeting that they held.

If we can have Prayer Meetings like that in Methodism, and we surely can, then our only anxiety would be as to the wise choice of the new forms of development of our work on the mission field made possible by the funds that would be at our disposal.

What has been said concerning the missionary Prayer Meeting applies equally to missionary prayer in the Class Meeting, in the Sunday School or in any other gathering. Let our young people know what prayer is; get them really to pray that prayer which is the necessary preliminary to all effectual prayer, "Lord, teach us how to pray."

The most helpful way of getting missionary

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intercession into the warp and woof of Church life is by the use of the Helpers' Union Manual. This little penny book has undoubtedly had as much as, if not far more than, anything else to do with the missionary revival of the past few years. In many of our Churches, both in towns and villages, a copy of the Helpers' Union Manual goes into the pulpit with the Bible, hymn book and the notices and is as regularly used. The chapel keeper puts another copy of the Manual on the table of every class leader and chairman at a Wesley Guild meeting, and on the desk of the superintendent of each department of the Sunday School. The topic of missionary intercession for the day can then be helpfully and naturally introduced into the public prayer of preacher, leader or superintendent. It is as easy to foster the habit of collective prayer for missions as it is to foster the habit of individual prayer and with equally valuable results. Copies of the Manual can be obtained from the Mission House.

The Helpers' Union still remains to be described. The Centenary Movement gave a great impetus to this side of the work of the W.M.M.S. In the four Centenary years 1910-1913 the membership of the Helpers' Union grew from 4,650 to 34,593, wonderful progress indeed, for which we thank God. The threefold aim of the Movement stated in logical order—study, pray and give—was accomplished in scores of circuits and Churches. Study circles, branches of the Helpers' Union, and an increased number of

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boxes in use, are a permanent memorial of those four years of strenuous toil. In a Church with a membership of nearly half a million and a greatly enlarged circle of adherents there is abundant scope for further work in connection with the Helpers' Union.

No one will imagine that the successful H.U. secretary is the one who in a wholesale fashion sweeps into the membership of his branch every man, woman and child that he can reach. True success comes to the man, quite as often it is a woman, who has a vision of a whole Church at prayer for missions, who seeks to realise that vision in his own life, and to win others one by one to the same way of thinking. There are some who require but little persuasion, there are others who may be influenced by a pamphlet, or by a few earnest personal words; there are many more who can be won if the Master's own loving tact, patience and courage are sought and used.

The organisation of the Helpers' Union is so simple and slender that it means everything or nothing just as its obligations are presented to the members.

The Helpers' Union Manual, popularly priced at a penny, is presumably familiar to every one who reads these pages. On the thirty-one days of the month are presented the prayer needs of the different types of missionary work on the field and of the different missionary districts with the names of the men and women at work in each. The little volume is a pocket en-

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cyclopædia of Methodist missions. The beautifully phrased topics for prayer soon become familiar to users of the Manual, and the missionaries soon become living personalities as we build up on each page our own memoranda concerning them from personal encounter, articles in the "Foreign Field" and elsewhere.

It is the circulation of the Helpers' Union Manual among those who will use it that constitutes the chief work of the Helpers' Union secretary. The simplest way to begin is to order a dozen or a score of manuals from the Mission House, together with cards of membership, and then to set to work to enlist suitable recruits.

There is no formal or binding pledge, from which some people might shrink. There is, however, an agreement as follows:—

"To pray regularly and earnestly in private for God's blessing upon missionary work.

"To join wherever possible, and especially at the monthly missionary Prayer Meeting, in united prayer for missions, and to promote prayer for missions amongst others.

"To render to the missionary cause all such service as must accompany prayer if it is really sincere and earnest."

It is worth some effort to be the means of securing "helpers" who will render these services to the missionary cause.

There are various leaflets which will be found useful in this work. They should not be used all at once, but each made to serve for a special canvass as opportunity offers. An occasional

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pulpit announcement or paragraph in the circuit magazine may be useful, but can never be a substitute for the personal canvass.

Scores of branches have been started by secretaries who have, after speaking to the minister, written direct to the Mission House volunteering for this work. We should be glad to hear from others offering similar help. Hundreds of other branches have been started by young people who have been induced to undertake this work by one who is already a Helpers' Union secretary, or by a minister, or one of the local missionary officials. There are ministers who have left behind them fairly complete Helpers' Union organisations in every circuit they have travelled in during the past ten years. In a few districts we have district Helpers' Union secretaries—we wish we had more. In some circuits there are *circuit* Helpers' Union secretaries—an excellent appointment often leading to the establishment of branches not only in practically every society, but sometimes two or three in one large society e.g. in the Sunday School, in a large Society Class, for the rank and file of the congregation. No missionary meeting in town or country is complete without a reference to the Helpers' Union, and an attempt to increase its membership.

Each secretary will secure a register from the Mission House on which to enrol the members. Each quarter a postcard return is made of the membership. If notices of removal of members are sent to the Mission House it will often lead

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to a member being transferred to another branch, and perhaps to much beside. A central branch at the Mission House serves to link on itinerating Methodists with the Helpers' Union, or affords an opportunity for membership to those who happen to live where there is no branch—though there should be few such places, since so small a membership as three may constitute a branch.

Occasionally we hear of little meetings being held by a branch of the Helpers' Union, and some branches act on a suggestion made by a secretary some time since, and send an extra penny per member per annum toward the headquarters' expenses of the Helpers' Union. These developments, however, are quite optional.

Three or four times a year there is issued to secretaries a supply for each of their members of a little broadsheet, "The Helpers' Union Message." This serves a useful purpose, inasmuch as it enables the Mission House to send literally a message to every member, with news of fresh triumphs and appeals for further prayer, and it enables the local secretary to keep in close touch with his members during the year.

The work of the Helpers' Union in each circuit should be reviewed from time to time by the circuit missionary committee, always remembering that very much more is required than mere resolutions.

God forbid that any of us should ever attempt in any way to measure or make mechanical the incalculable, illimitable forces of prayer, but to

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secure for those same forces the utmost scope in the public and private devotional life of the Church is surely not optional but obligatory.

We want more prayer and yet more prayer. "Not the prayer that sits by with folded hands and waits for God to perform miracles, but prayer accompanied by tireless effort and faithful work."

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IX IN FINANCE

"The only way to give is as God gives to us."

THERE are some people who think that missions spell money and nothing else. On the other hand there are a few unpractical people who are undoubtedly deeply interested in missions, but they seem to have a rooted objection to engage actively in any financial efforts on their behalf. Happy are those who give finance its *proper* place in connection with the missionary enterprise.

There can be no finality to the missionary appeal while there is any missionary work to be done in any corner of God's earth. Modern warfare is costly to an alarming degree, and modern warfare on the mission field with such weapons as fully equipped orphanages, schools, training institutions, colleges and hospitals, all directed by staff officers who are specialists, and employing whole regiments of local workers, is also increasingly costly.

While the Church at home has heavy demands made upon it for financial support from every department of work there are still wide margins between what is being done and what might be done. It is an axiom, too, that the Church

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becomes richer and not poorer as it gives more to the work of foreign missions.

It would be foolish to attempt to fix any sum of money as a final discharge of the missionary obligation of the whole Methodist Church, or of any one part of it. The responsibility of the missionary worker is discharged when he has taken every possible opportunity to let the whole Church know the world's need of the Gospel message, and when he has taken every possible means to secure from every member the utmost response in various ways, including pounds, shillings and pence. A considerable programme of work is involved in a campaign of this kind. It is the object of this chapter to indicate some of the ways in which the maximum financial harvest may be reaped after faithful sowing of missionary seed.

The six main sources of missionary income, familiar to all who fill up missionary schedules, are (1) adult subscriptions, (2) boxes, (3) Christmas Offerings, (4) Juvenile Missionary Associations, (5) public collections, (6) gifts for medical work.

It is difficult to over-estimate the work done by the missionary collectors of Methodism. No longer are they mere annual "receivers" of certain fixed gifts, they are the allies of the Missionary Committee, fully acquainted with the needs of the work, able to plead for an increased gift and an adequate response from those whose duty and privilege it is to respond, well aware of the need for the early payment

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of subscriptions and always on the look-out for an opportunity to increase the number of their subscribers. Periodical meetings between the secretary and his collectors are very desirable. Few Churches canvass their membership as thoroughly for missions as, say, a ward committee canvasses for a municipal election. A complete register of all possible subscribers, including the young wage-earners in the congregation, and a definite personal appeal to every one for gifts, small as well as large, are surely possible and desirable everywhere.

“It has always seemed to me,” to quote from an expert, “that there are two things which help on the human side to make the work of a collector successful. First there is the method of approach. To call at a subscriber’s house casually and without any warning is often to court disappointment. It is desirable to see the subscriber himself, and it is a prudent thing therefore to send an intimation beforehand, asking for an interview, and suggesting a time, using the specially prepared letters of the Mission House for this purpose. The second important thing is the spirit and bearing of the collector during the interview. It is a business not to be apologised for, it concerns the King and the Kingdom. The collector should go, not to extract a tooth, but to confer a privilege. Subscribers will generally take a collector at his or her own valuation. If, for instance, a lady collector approaches them as though she felt she were sure to be regarded as a nuisance,

they will vote her a nuisance ; but if, in modest confidence, she stands up to them, talks the question out with them, and sets forth the need and therefore the claim of the work that is being done, they will take her at that valuation and treat her accordingly."

Another writer in the "H.O.D. Magazine" offers some equally shrewd advice.

"Know the facts of the situation and appreciate the need yourself. You will never convince others until *you* are convinced.

"Have a plan of campaign. It is not enough to tell yourself that you will ask your subscribers to pay 'when you meet them.' Get a supply of letters from the Mission House. If you make an appointment—even an approximate one—with any of your subscribers, see that you keep it. Call when you believe that you have the best chance of success—even though it may be inconvenient to yourself. Always leave behind an appropriate leaflet.

"Obtain new subscribers. As time passes every collector for any object will realise that she must be aggressive if she would hold her own. In other words, if a subscription list is merely to be maintained year after year, new donors must be found, or losses can never be made up. Removals into your district, newly-founded homes, recent converts to the cause of missions, young people earning 'good money'—all these and many other opportunities present themselves to the keen collector. Do not be discouraged if all whom you solicit do

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not yield to your entreaties immediately. Some will, while others may take years to persuade. Stick to them, however, and regard none as hopeless.

“Persuade as many as possible already on your list to increase their subscriptions. Get a ten-year-old copy of the report and compare the amounts given then with those given to you last year. You will discover that many friends are in a much better position to give ten guineas now, than they were to give the one guinea with which they started and which they still continue to pay. Perhaps there is a member of the Laymen’s Movement in your Church or district whose help you might consider it expedient to ask before approaching some donors regarding an increased amount.

“Pay in promptly. Don’t wait till all your amounts are in, but every month let your local secretary have your money, even if it is only a few shillings. It will then be gratifying to you to see in the ‘H.O.D. Magazine’ the amount acknowledged from your circuit growing month by month.”

Collectors can do more than anybody else to support the efforts of the Missionary Committee in their desire to secure “half the income in the first half of the year.” It is obviously *not* the best plan to collect subscriptions at the time of the anniversary. Missionary subscriptions are due on May 1st (see “Minutes of Conference”), and every effort should be made to get in those paid annually as soon as possible after that date.

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One circuit adopting a campaign for early payment of subscriptions, achieved a success which surprised themselves. The record was as follows :

Income from	1st year	2nd year	3rd year	4th year
	£	£	£	£
January 1 to May 31 . . .	6	63	264	300
June 1 to September 30 . .	19	54	27	35
October 1 to December 31 .	260	229	79	84
Totals	285	346	370	419

The secret of this splendid bit of missionary enterprise was summer meetings and early collection of subscriptions. The collectors reported that subscriptions were “literally thrust upon them.”

The first column of the schedule includes not only annual subscriptions, but donations and miscellaneous gifts.

A member of the Committee looking over the details of income as set out in a recent report observes : “There is a pleasant variety of means for raising missionary money—bazaars, jam-making, suppers, teas, concerts, carols, festivals, parliaments, Christmas trees and garden parties, altogether apart from the ordinary collections and subscriptions.”

These, and many other ingenious devices of loving hearts and clever hands have been employed to swell the stream of missionary gifts that reach Bishopsgate year by year. The sale of old jewellery, waste paper, old bottles, foreign

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stamps, the contents of farthing bags; all help to make up the total. Missionary trading is a well-established institution in some circuits. At the anniversary, pennies or sixpences are issued to any young people who will promise to "trade" with them during the year, the profits on the penny ball of crochet cotton are reinvested again and again in a still more remunerative ratio, and during the year the penny or the sixpence grows into shillings or even into pounds. An interesting feature of any missionary meeting is a statement made by the missionary traders themselves, of the ways in which they have been faithful in that which has been committed to them.

A wealth of suggestion for town and country on this subject is contained in a little pamphlet supplied gratis by the Mission House entitled "Love's Ingenuity."

Gratis literature for distribution, including different kinds of letters of appeal are available for collectors, and also various types of collecting books, together with the formal receipt book which every collector should use.

The missionary box is one of the oldest methods of raising money for missions, and it still remains one of the best. Again and again it has been proved that even in Churches which thought they were doing well for missions, a vigorous box campaign has revealed considerable margins of missionary possibility. On application boxes and labels are supplied by the Mission House gratis to missionary secretaries, who are

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of course expected to keep a record of the issue of boxes and of the income derived from their use. The removal of a boxholder to another circuit should be at once notified to the Mission House, who will follow the matter up. Special forms for advising such removals can be obtained from the H.O. Department. A special form of box register is issued by the Mission House, and this register should be sent to the H.O. Department once a year. The indiscriminate broadcasting of unregistered boxes at an anniversary is likely to do more harm than good. People who take a box should do so with a sense of responsibility, and the secretaries, who will open boxes quarterly and who will keep in touch with boxholders by circular letters during the year, will get results which will be an ample reward for the trouble taken. The letters M.B.O. regularly appear on some circuit plans, and the side references show that these mean "Missionary Box Opening."

The following striking testimonies to the usefulness of the missionary box are taken from the "H.O.D. Magazine" and other sources.

"Why not adopt as an ideal the motto 'A missionary box in every Methodist home'? Let us tell our people that no matter how well furnished a home may be it is not completely furnished without a missionary box. In a Yorkshire Church in which there were no boxes in circulation ten years ago the adoption of the motto resulted as follows :

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At end of first	year	15 boxes issued :	result	£5
" " " second	"	60	" " "	£23
" " " third	"	90	" " "	£30
" " " fourth	"	165	" " "	£56
" " " fifth	"	200	" " "	£76
" " " sixth	"	220	" " "	£88
" " " seventh	"	220	" " "	£91
" " " eighth	"	238	" " "	£96
" " " ninth	"	260	" " "	£106

Apart from the financial result, think of the immense gain of having nearly three hundred people so far interested in missions as to be working for them all through the year."

"In one wide and thinly populated country circuit the number of boxes in use increased in two years from 120 to 294, and the receipts from these from £94 to £130."

"A missionary box in the vestry will often attract contributions just because it is in the vestry."

The following bit of experience is food for thought. "At our meeting last year a large employer of labour returned a missionary box, he could do nothing with it—absolutely nothing. One of his employés offered to take it, and got over two pounds in it during the year."

Scarcely a week passes without there reaching us some beautiful story of missionary giving associated with the missionary box. "Take care of that box," said an old farm labourer whimsically, "my wife put a new dress in there yesterday."

"Everybody, alas, has not wakened up sufficiently to the general appeal, but many of these will take a medical box if asked."

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“A year ago the box income in our circuit was £17 1s. 9d.; this year it is £51 6s. 5d., and for a very simple reason. Then, there were just 20 boxes out, now, we have 101 in use. Look out for bigger things still in a year’s time.”

“Forty sixpences dropped into a box with a silent prayer for God’s blessing upon our missionaries will do far more good than the annual guinea thoughtlessly given.”

“It was solely due to the extension of the box system in this circuit that we were able to report an increase on our previous best of £12.”

Children’s efforts have been dealt with in Chapter III. It may be that there are some children in the congregation who are not in the Sunday School. It should be the secretary’s aim to link these up with missionary work in some way, possibly by putting into their hands a copy of “At Home and Abroad,” and by obtaining the parents’ consent for them to take a box. It is high missionary strategy to look round any congregation and to see how many more links can be forged in the missionary chain, adding alike to its length and its strength. Not the least valuable of these living links is the “child in the midst.” May we be forgiven if we ever forget him.

It is in connection with the finance of the children’s effort that a thorny question sometimes emerges, viz.—the division of the money raised by the Juvenile Missionary Association. There are two kinds of collecting books in use, one series (in buff covers) for foreign missions

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only, and the other series (in red covers) for home and foreign missions. It would appear to rest with the local Sunday School Council to decide which of these two series of collecting books shall be used in that particular school. A word of caution needs to be sounded here. While the Foreign Missionary Committee is very thankful for every penny of income which it can get, it does not want that income to be given at the expense of the great sister Committee responsible for the important work of *Home Missions*, nor does it want to divert moneys which may form part, perhaps the larger part, of the support of any *bona-fide* home missionary activity in the circuit. Missionary enthusiasts in the Sunday School Council will do well to bear this in mind. It has sometimes happened that a decision has been arrived at in a meeting of the local Sunday School Council which, while quite within the rights of the Council, has affected the finances not only of the Connexional Home Mission Fund, but also of some circuit home missionary effort, and strong feelings have been aroused which in the end have been distinctly harmful to the interests of foreign missions. This is a matter for patience, tact and mutual consideration.

Of course in the case of a Sunday School *beginning* the system of weekly collecting the local Council has a free hand as to the methods to be adopted. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that whatever the method may be, the objects to which the proceeds are devoted

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should be clearly understood by the Council, the Sunday School officials and teachers, the juvenile collectors and, as far as possible, by the subscribers.

The decision on this matter rests entirely with the friends on the spot, in no case is any advice offered, or influence used, as to the method of division, by the officers of either the Connexional Home or Foreign Missionary Committees.

When a decision has been arrived at, then certain very definite instructions of the Conference must be followed. If the money has been collected wholly for foreign missions, the course to be taken is quite obvious. If, however, it has been collected for home and foreign missions, then one of two courses must be followed. The moneys raised by means of the books of a Home and Foreign Juvenile Association can be divided into two equal portions, one of which is sent to home missions, and the other to foreign missions, or the moneys raised can be divided into three equal portions, one of which is sent to home missions, one to foreign missions, and the other to any effort in the circuit of a "directly home missionary character."

It should be noted that it is irregular to devote the proceeds of a *Home and Foreign Juvenile Association* *all* to foreign missions or *all* to home missions. It is also irregular to devote one-half to foreign missions and to divide the remaining one-half between Connexional home missions and circuit home missionary work.

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Where a third of the proceeds of a Home and Foreign Juvenile Missionary Association is retained in the circuit for work of a "directly home missionary character," then certain very distinct obligations are incurred.

In the first place this "third" cannot be earmarked in perpetuity for any circuit fund. It must be expended "in support of local movements of a directly home missionary character under the direction of the superintendent and of a committee to be appointed at the December Quarterly Meeting." It is a reasonable thing to suggest that the interests of foreign missions and home missions should be adequately represented on that committee in addition to those of circuit missions. This committee, like any other circuit committee entrusted with financial responsibilities, will of course report to the Quarterly Meeting in due course.

There has been some heart-searching as to the meaning of the phrase "local movements of a directly home missionary character." Occasionally this has been misinterpreted in the past in such a way as to approach very closely to becoming a scandal. To apply the pence collected by the children, usually under the comprehensive appeal of "missions," to such objects as advertising the regular Sunday services of a well-to-do Church, or purchasing an expensive organ for very occasional open-air work, or furnishing cash for miscellaneous items of expenditure not otherwise provided for, or giving the Mothers' Meeting a treat, is to do what

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surely the corporate conscience of an ordinary circuit will not wish to do, especially when it is remembered that this money would otherwise be forwarded to the always hard-pressed Home and Foreign Mission Funds.

Bona fide circuit enterprises of a "directly home missionary character" are however as much entitled to a third of the proceeds of a Home and Foreign Juvenile Missionary Association, if they need it, as are the two Connexional Funds, and circuit administrators will wish the definite regulations of the Conference on the subject to be strictly adhered to.

A word should perhaps be said as to the issue of Christmas Offering cards. The best way to issue these is to take them to the homes of the most likely children, thereby winning the sympathy and co-operation of both parent and child. Another good way is to call for volunteers to meet the secretary on a Sunday afternoon or before a week-night service. If it is quite impossible for the circuit secretary to issue the cards personally, possibly some local enthusiast could do so, but be sure it *is* done by an enthusiast. In some cases the sending by post of the cards, together with a letter of thanks and stimulus, to last year's collectors, would be abundantly justified. Children, especially in the villages, always appreciate a letter, and they are likely to gauge the need for their services by the trouble taken to secure them. The co-operation of the Sunday School superintendent is always desirable, and the prompt

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return of the cards is absolutely essential in view of the circuit accounts closing early in January.

The gross total of all collections should be returned on the annual schedule, any expenses, e.g. deputation, travelling, or printing, should be shown on the other side of the cash account.

The medical column of the annual schedule provides a place for the entry of subscriptions specially earmarked for medical missions, the proceeds of medical boxes, contributions from the Wesley Guild toward medical missions, sale of medical mission flags and other similar items. All such amounts are included in this column as part of the circuit missionary total.

The work of completing the annual schedule will be easy and light, or complicated and troublesome, according to the way in which missionary finance has been dealt with during the year.

A number of secretaries are now using the "Circuit Officers' Book" and the "Circuit Secretary's Account Book" (on the loose-leaf system) and find them extremely valuable.

One experienced accountant advises his brother missionary secretaries to adopt the following plan:

"Use the 'Circuit Officers' Book' as a ledger, and have a page more or less for every place in the circuit. Have a cash book, the Mission House supply one gratis, but any kind will do. Issue a printed receipt for every item you receive, and if possible ascertain what form of income it represents, whether subscriptions, boxes, collections, etc.

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When Mr. Jones pays you £10 received for subscriptions collected at Alton, Mr. Smith £8 for quarterly box openings at Broxbourne and Mr. Brown £6 for collections at Clayley, you make out and send the receipts, then enter the amounts on three consecutive lines on the left-hand side of your cash book, and post from that into your ledger under the various headings reserved for Alton, Broxbourne, and Clayley in the proper columns for subscriptions, boxes, collections, etc., and also carry the accumulating total into the last column. When you send off your cheque for £24 to the circuit treasurer an entry of this is made on the *right*-hand side of your cash book. Your aim should always be to have the two sides of your cash book totalling the same amount, thereby showing that you have paid over all amounts that have reached you.

At any moment you can put down on a piece of paper the accumulating total in the last columns of the various pages of your "Circuit Officers' Book," and the total of this should agree with the total receipts to date appearing in your cash book. There should be three or four such moments during the year.

If any local secretary in remitting to you deducts any expenses (e.g. for printing) the gross amount must be entered on the left-hand side in your cash book and the amount of the expenses shown per contra on the other side.

If this plan is adopted the filling up of the annual schedule in January becomes a very

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easy matter. First of all when all items of income are in, cast up the total of the receipts in your cash book, then do the same with the totals in the "Circuit Officers' Book." These *must* agree, otherwise the schedule can never be made correct. The re-writing of the various items from the "Circuit Officers' Book" on to the schedule itself is then only a matter of arranging subscriptions into alphabetical order, and adding together two or four separate items for boxes or Juvenile Association, etc., if these have been paid in instalments. Any Church which has a considerable income and which manages its own affairs, can pay in lump sums periodically to the circuit treasurer during the year without furnishing details, and at the end give full particulars of its income on the "local schedules" provided for that purpose by the Mission House. In such cases, of course, the total amount only, will be posted into the last column of the "Circuit Officers' Book" under the heading reserved for that particular Church.

It is particularly requested that all remittances from circuits be made in the constitutional way through the district treasurer and not direct to the Mission House. The latter course if widely adopted would necessitate the employment of extra staff and therefore entail extra expense, as every amount received direct has to be advised to the district treasurer concerned. It is very important that the circuit and district missionary organisation should be in the closest co-operation at every possible point.

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A word or two ought to be said with regard to "special contributions"—a difficult question, and one which, with some people, it really is positively hopeless to discuss. "It's all missionary money, it goes through the Mission House, and should all be acknowledged as part of the circuit income."

Now this matter cannot be so easily disposed of; we wish it could. It would then save an infinity of book-keeping and correspondence and patient interviews at the Mission House.

Let us remind ourselves that the missionary schedules record the contributions of a Church and circuit to the general funds of the Society, the spending of which is entrusted to the Committee.

If Mr. A., moved by a God-inspired impulse, gives £100 to repair a devastated Church in the West Indies, we take the gift gladly, and send it out by the very next mail, but that in no sense helps the Committee to pay for all the evangelistic, educational, and other work in that and other fields which it stands pledged to support. Similarly, if a Sunday School sends £5 or £10 for a special orphan, that money has to be sent out to India or China over and above the sums which pay the larger items of missionaries' stipends, native schools, the upkeep of hospitals. If the system of special contributions were allowed to develop as some would like, the Missionary Society would find itself in a position to pay for all the picturesque items of expenditure on a mission station, but it would

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have no means with which to pay those other charges for maintenance of the work which really give solidity and permanence to the whole.

We have elaborated this point to show the difference between general and special funds.

If, however, the spending of a special gift, e.g. Mass Movement, Medical Missions, Wesley Guild Doctor, is in the hands of the General Committee, then the money given *is* part of the circuit's contributions to the general funds of the Society. If, on the other hand, it is earmarked for some special purpose, or for the use of some special missionary, then the spending is *not* controlled by the General Committee, who merely act as forwarding agents only—a rôle, by the way, they are always pleased to play. If our friends will be so kind as to send their special gifts direct to the Mission House and not through the circuit and district treasurers, it will be a very great boon. The gift will be forwarded to the field very much more quickly, and due acknowledgment will be given of such additional gifts in a special column in the annual report. All this is clearly set out in the schedules themselves, as is also the instruction that no contributions to the Women's Auxiliary should appear on the schedule of the Parent Society.

Auditors of circuit missionary accounts should be appointed at the December Quarterly Meeting. With a view to saving time the signature of one auditor is regarded as sufficient on the circuit schedule. A safe rule for auditors to

follow is to require a voucher for every item which should have documentary support. The addition of all columns, the division of Juvenile Association money, the deductions for expenses and rewards, and the agreement of the list of remittances to the district treasurer with his receipts, will all receive the careful attention of the auditor. "If there is to be an audit," announced one newly appointed missionary auditor, "then let it *be* an audit."

As a rule the circuit missionary officials are far more jealous than anybody else as to the deductions from missionary income for local expenses. Obviously, deductions have to be made, yet there should be a reasonable ratio between expense and income. A district committee called the attention of a certain circuit to the considerable total of their expenses. "But it was under five per cent of our income," was the surprised reply. "Your expenses ought not to have been two and-a-half per cent. of your income," was the shrewd answer of the district treasurer, "seeing that half your income was from annual subscriptions which cost nothing to collect." Sometimes, however, there is a "withholding of more than is meet." In a certain Synod a superintendent was questioned very kindly concerning a diminished missionary income in his circuit. "Ah, but look at the smallness of our expenses," was his triumphant reply. "I have been looking at the smallness of the expenses, Mr. Chairman," said the district secretary, "and I have been wondering

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what kind of a missionary campaign it was to cost only eleven shillings and threepence."

The final act of the circuit for the missionary year is the closing of the accounts. The timetable suggested is as follows :

January 10. All collectors and juvenile secretaries to complete their accounts, including Christmas Offering cards, and hand full statement and final remittance to their local or circuit officers.

January 17. All local secretaries to close their accounts and hand a local schedule with last remittance attached to the circuit officers.

January 24. The last day for circuit officers. The circuit schedule, duly audited, passed by the circuit committee and signed by the superintendent, to be in the hands of the district treasurer who will then close the accounts for the district and forward schedules and final remittances to the Mission House.

The standing order of the Conference is very explicit. "In no circuit shall the missionary accounts for the year be closed until they have been passed by the local or circuit missionary committee and duly signed by the superintendent of the circuit."

It may be urged that this whole chapter concerns itself with trifles. That is true, but to quote an old saw : "perfection is made up of trifles, but perfection is no trifle."

Among Laymen

X

AMONG LAYMEN

*" In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
You will find the Christian soldier
Represented by—his wife ! "*

THE reproach upon missionary " slackers " among laymen lurking behind these serio-comic lines has been largely wiped out in Methodism by the activities of the Wesleyan Laymen's Movement.

At the Liverpool Conference of 1912 this Movement was inaugurated with a very definite end in view, but with the most elastic organisation. Striking success has followed the inspired efforts of the honorary secretaries and the other officers of the Movement in the Swanwick conferences, and in many other directions. This calls for the profoundest gratitude to God on the part of all who are interested in the progress of missions.

The Movement has its own literature which, at the cost of a few pence, can be supplied by the Mission House on receipt of a post card.

The usual furlough conference of the Wesleyan Laymen's Missionary Movement is the mainspring of its activities. The invitation to

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laymen is an absolutely open one. Some come because they are enthusiasts, some come because of the influence of their friends, there are others who come out of curiosity, but in most cases when they have heard the facts, up-to-date, red-hot, they go home new men, determined to help the Laymen's Movement to bring a different atmosphere into their circuits.

Six or seven men came to Swanwick from a certain Yorkshire town as the result of the influence of one man. A year later the chairman of the district remarked, "the Methodist atmosphere of that town is so different now, that I can feel it as soon as I leave the station!"

Every layman interested in missions should make a big effort to get to one of these Swanwick conferences, which in normal times are held in the spring of the year. Having come once, he will want to come again, and to bring with him some of the "key" men of his circuit—the thoughtful young local preachers, the men of influence in the Sunday Schools, the leaders of Society Classes and Brotherhoods. Some of the most remunerative missionary investments of recent years have been the sums paid by various laymen to make it possible for others, not so well off, to get to Swanwick.

Gatherings over a week-end, on similar lines to Swanwick, have been arranged in a district in the north of England. "The men who came, eighteen or twenty, were circuit missionary officials. Every man got an inspiration and a blessing." Nothing but good is likely to follow

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such conferences, the number of which will certainly increase as time goes on.

On a still smaller scale, but with results equally helpful to the missionary cause, the Swanwick spirit was reproduced at a missionary luncheon arranged on a market-day in the Methodist schoolroom of a certain circuit chapel. The farmers and other visitors from the villages dropped in for an hour and a half after their morning's work was done. In that period they disposed of the meal which the ladies had provided and for which the guests gladly paid. Then they had a stirring missionary address for half an hour, followed by a short discussion. That missionary "ordinary" had some extraordinary results, and its influence is felt to this day.

While the results of the Wesleyan Laymen's Movement have been considerable in connection with missions, this by no means marks the limit of the benefits that have followed. "The missionary appeal found me a trustee and made me a class-leader" is one experience that could be duplicated many times over. "When I want anything done for missions," announced the chairman of an important district recently, "I get hold of a minister or a layman who has been to Swanwick."

Hundreds of laymen have come to realise "that missions are a man's job" and they have started to work among their fellow laymen in many cases on quite original lines.

One of the London circuits arranged a Lay-

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men's supper for which two hundred tickets were sold at one shilling each, the purchaser in each case being pledged to be present. Adequate arrangements were made with a caterer, the small charge per head in advance of the shilling paid by the laymen was met by half-a-dozen of the promoters. Having a meal together in this way afforded ample opportunity for social intercourse, valuable because all too rare in a London circuit. It had been announced that no appeal would be made for money, the gathering was to be solely for the purpose of arousing interest and spreading information. There were two missionary guests who had come prepared to be cross-examined. Six or ten searching questions had been drawn up beforehand, and a copy of these sent to the guests. Various laymen asked these questions and received their answers, and in some cases supplementary questions were asked with one or two impromptus. The two missionary guests enjoyed themselves immensely. The laymen were impressed with the bigness of the task of Christian missions, the many-sided problems that arise and the practical statesmanship evidenced by those whose duty it was to deal with these. Not a single penny was raised for missions that night but, far more important, for close on two hours the leading laymen of that circuit were thinking hard on missions. It is difficult always to relate cause and effect, or to tabulate influences, but from that day that circuit has never looked back in its missionary income.

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In a certain Methodist stronghold in the North of England there is a band of business men as keen on missions as on, say, dividends. They have evolved a plan which has proved very fruitful. In the course of the year quite a number of missionaries come to the various Churches in that city for the usual week-end services. It is the custom for two or three laymen connected with the circuit visited to arrange for a lunch on the Monday in a private room of a central restaurant. To this are invited three or four other laymen who are keen, and as many more who have not as yet shown any missionary interest. Each layman pays his own bill. Lunch is quickly disposed of and then for half-an-hour, or it may be a little longer, golf, business, Methodist gossip are all taboo. The laymen and the visiting missionary come to close grips on missionary matters. Questions of the most pointed nature are asked by both enthusiast and non-enthusiast and the little gathering always ends in prayer. Never yet has one of these Monday missionary lunch parties been held without the visitors warmly thanking the laymen who had made the arrangements, and asking when a similar gathering would be held. In no centre in the kingdom has missions a firmer hold on the Methodist laymen than in this particular city.

Yet another delightful bit of work is done by a layman in a residential locality in the Midlands. He invites three or four missionaries to stay with him for three or four days. Usually

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the invitations are given and accepted at the May Meetings or at the Swanwick conference. Every evening that the missionaries are with him, this layman packs his house with as many laymen as it will hold. After cakes and coffee they make a missionary night of it, and, so the story goes, keep very bad hours indeed. One of the difficulties that layman has is to persuade his visitors that he is not the right person to receive missionary subscriptions. There are properly appointed collectors who see to all that. *His* function is to let the layman know what missionaries are doing, and what they still want to do to win the world for Jesus Christ.

Another layman in the same district struck out in quite a different but equally useful direction. He arranged for laymen, very few of whom were local preachers, to state the case for missions in a great number of pulpits in the district on a certain Sunday evening. This was done with most fruitful results.

One of the leading business men of America recently addressing a great gathering in connection with the Laymen's Movement urged his fellow-laymen to take their part in missionary advocacy. "We've got an unanswerable case, gentlemen," he declared. "What we've got to do is to learn how to put it. We must know how to meet objections to missions, just as our salesmen know how to meet objections to our products."

The district treasurer of a scattered agri-

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cultural area, only indifferently equipped as to train service, started a motor car and chauffeur solely to be able to take three or four speakers from the central circuits to spread the missionary fire among little gatherings of other laymen in the remote corners of the district. When national conditions made that particular activity well nigh impossible, this same layman kept in touch with some of his local preacher friends in the rural areas by posting to them, with his compliments, a copy of Oldham's "World and the Gospel." Who that wants to, could fail to preach a missionary sermon with that book in his hands?

There are now quite a number of districts in which there is a panel of laymen who are willing to go to missionary meetings, small as well as large, not to take the chair, but to speak on missions. To one of the most influential districts of Methodism a number of laymen offered to go in groups to different centres for a parliament on missions. They received an embarrassing number of invitations and most enthusiastic reports of their meetings are reaching the Mission House.

The circulation of suitable literature is another service that laymen are rendering to the cause of missions. A great temperance worker of a previous generation used to say that they carried prohibition in a certain American State by sowing it three feet deep with prohibition literature.

Here is a method of circulating missionary

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literature which has been successful on numerous occasions :—

“ I took two or three of the best pamphlets I could get on missions, and on the outside cover of each I pasted a typewritten list of names, using three or four groups of my acquaintances that I wanted to interest in missions. My own name appeared as the last in each list. I sent each pamphlet to the man whose name appeared at the top of the list, asking him to read it, and then to tick off his own name and hand the pamphlet to the next man. In this way, those pamphlets came back to me within two weeks with every name ticked off, every man having read at least one of them. Men will find time to read a missionary pamphlet when you can't get them to read a missionary book.”

The Laymen's Movement secretary of a Lancashire district arranged for a missionary section of the local public free library with a separate catalogue. He always makes a point at Laymen's meetings of urging the use of the books available.

These are but a few of the ways in which the laymen of Methodism are in these later days throwing themselves into missionary work. The exhilaration of it, to the laymen themselves and to many others, has to be experienced to be rightly appreciated.

We want more and yet more such laymen as missionary leaders, men who have both business capacity and spiritual vision.

Among Auxiliary Forces

XI

AMONG AUXILIARY FORCES

"The boldest measures are often the safest."

The local preacher. In any average country circuit the local preacher is one of the most valuable helpers that the missionary secretary can secure. He can establish a link between the centre and the most remote village cause. The method of approach may be the more formal one—direct to the circuit Local Preachers' Meeting, or it may be informally to a few local preachers to whom the secretary can impart his own vision of a circuit on fire for the salvation of the world.

Some Local Preachers' Meetings detail one of their number each quarter to preach missionary sermons at all his appointments during that quarter—and this of course quite apart from any financial appeal. A small local lending library of missionary books for local preachers is established in some circuits. In other places the missionary secretary has brought to a Local Preachers' Meeting half-a-dozen volumes from the Mission House lending library, and offered them to those present. A discussion on Mott's "Home Ministry and Modern Missions," or a

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round-table conference on suitable material for missionary sermons might well occupy an hour of a meeting of local preachers at which other business is not of pressing importance.

There is no end to the individual missionary service that a local preacher may render. One secretary puts into the hands of the best storyteller "on the plan" every new volume of "Yarns" that appears. Another marks his plan and circularises the men who can best help him so that the children in each place in the circuit get a missionary address in the morning service, at least once a month. Another secretary in a wide country circuit similarly secures the co-operation of the local preachers when he issues the Christmas Offering cards, and another for the Sunday preceding the circuit half-yearly box opening. The appointments for the quarter in which the village anniversaries are held are closely scanned by most secretaries, and where any help of literature, etc., would be welcomed it is made *well in advance* of the Sunday when missionary sermons are to be preached. Most local preachers are good-tempered enough to turn themselves into common carriers to the extent of taking to any village cause a parcel of boxes or missionary magazines. It is in such ways as these that the local preacher, to whom Methodism owes so much, is able and more than willing to help the missionary cause.

The circuit magazine. It is difficult to over-estimate the value of the circuit magazine as

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a medium for reaching the rank and file of a circuit with any kind of message. This being the case, most missionary secretaries are on the friendliest terms with the editor of such an organ. The plan of campaign for the village meetings appears in most circuit magazines well in advance of the first of the series. From time to time progress—educational as well as financial—should be reported. One of our veteran secretaries recently told us that in recent years his method was as follows:—"In January a forecast of the results of the year just closing always appeared, with an urgent appeal for prayer that the goal before the circuit might be reached. In February a report on the closed accounts was inserted, and comments made on the outstanding incidents of the year. In the summer when 'copy' was not as a rule so plentiful, space could generally be found for a letter from a missionary—all the better if there were some definite connection between the writer and the circuit. Now and again a block borrowed from the H.O. Department was used to fill up a vacant corner. A page of short interesting missionary paragraphs was sent to the editor to be used from month to month as 'fill-ups.' Speaking generally," he concluded, "I prefer to use any space I can get given me for educational matter and anticipatory announcements, rather than for reports of sermons or meetings which appear long after an anniversary has been held."

The class leader. There are few forces in

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Methodism more valuable to missions than the whole-hearted sympathy of a leader of a live Society Class. The help sought from him is not financial; that can be secured in other ways. His part is rather that of an auxiliary in a campaign of missionary education, which can only be complete as it includes the spiritual agencies of the Church, upon which in the last analysis true success in all missionary work must depend.

Hundreds of Society Classes have a missionary evening periodically, sometimes once a quarter, and often once a month. The Helpers' Union Manual is peculiarly adapted to the Society Class, and is very widely used. Often the page for the day forms the starting point of conversation before prayer. The missionary obligations laid down in the Bible, Methodist missionary history and biography, missionary literature generally, correspondence with the mission field, all these, in which both leaders and members take part, afford abundant opportunity for the introduction of missions into not only the thought but the prayers and the very centre of the life of the Class.

The faithful loving words of the class leader have often led to personal service on the mission field, and it has been the equally faithful and equally loving words which have led many a good Methodist of an older generation to look upon missions in an entirely different light. Many Society Classes turn themselves into missionary study circles preparatory to the annual missionary meeting, and happy is the deputa-

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tion who finds his coming prepared for in this way.

The day school teacher. The wise propagandist of any cause always makes a point of capturing the interest and active sympathy of the day school teacher—with what effect we have seen in War Savings Associations, and other matters of national importance. The missionary worker, especially if responsible for any activities among boys and girls, will do well to take counsel with any day school teachers to be found in the local Church.

More than one secretary has found that he has learnt much by an informal meeting over a cup of coffee with four or five experienced teachers, as he has consulted them concerning the best way to plant missions in the Sunday Schools of his circuit. In one case the suggestions made were carried on to the various Sunday School Councils, and wrought a complete revolution in the missionary instruction of the boys and girls under their care.

Many juvenile secretaries make a point of calling in the aid of the day school teachers when preparing for the annual juvenile meeting, and frequently they make suggestions and initiate features which entirely transform that event.

The tremendous missionary opportunity of the day school teachers while engaged in their ordinary professional duties are set out in a little pamphlet "The Day School Teacher and Missions" which can be obtained from the Mission House (4d. post free.)

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The chapel keeper. Everybody knows what a difference is made to any Church when the chapel keeper is thoroughly in sympathy with every department of the work. "I always see that there are sufficient drawing pins for missionary bills," says one smiling servant of the Church. "Our chapel keeper puts a copy of the *Helpers' Union Manual* every week on the Sunday School superintendent's desk, and on the table of every class leader," writes a secretary in the Midlands. A "*Foreign Field*" distributor sends round most of his magazines by hand. A few, for subscribers who live at a distance, are handed to the chapel keeper, who sees that they are put in the pews *and taken away*. Many chapel keepers are themselves missionary box holders and workers for missions in other ways. An occasional committee meeting of two—the missionary secretary and the chapel keeper—may be fruitful of much.

The Wesley Guild secretary. It can be taken for granted that no Wesley Guild will wish to keep missions out of its programme. It becomes a question as to how the subject can be most helpfully introduced. The booklet "*Thirty Missionary Programmes*" should be in the hands of every missionary secretary, and he in turn should see that each Guild secretary has an opportunity to quarry from it. Special programmes are also available on Africa and on medical missions. These publications make it abundantly clear that missionary evenings can be made among the most fascinating of any in

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all four departments of the Guild—social, literary, Christian service, and devotional. On the financial side it is an easy matter to raise money for Guild medical missions, by means of the exceedingly simple “League of Ten” cards. Ten people promise to give a penny a month (not a week) and one young man or woman collects the ten shillings—that is all. The proceeds go to swell the local missionary income, and are remitted through the usual local channels, not direct to London or Leeds. A missionary parliament provides another excellent missionary evening for a Guild, full particulars of this are given in a gratis pamphlet supplied by the Mission House. Lantern and curio lectures, and sets of stereoscopic missionary pictures can be booked, and the earlier this is done in each case the better will be the selection. For those who have to give papers on missionary subjects the resources of the Mission House lending library are available.

The Brotherhood. It is a sound policy for the missionary secretary to endeavour to link up any living force within the Church with the missionary cause. There are many vigorous Brotherhoods connected with Methodism which might be far more closely associated with missions than is at present the case. Any one who says that the working man cannot be interested in missions is wrong. He *can* be. In many Brotherhoods and similar gatherings in various parts of the country, great numbers of working men are being made deeply interested. Why

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should not this be the case everywhere? True, it requires a certain type of speaker, but he can be found. There are great missionary principles which appeal to the working classes whenever they are properly presented. An object lesson was furnished at a recent London Conference when two missionaries at an open-air meeting in Hyde Park held a miscellaneous crowd for an hour and a half as they talked missions in a way which that audience could understand, and when they had finished these two speakers received a hearty round of applause! If the "man in the park" can be roused in that way it is a much easier task to reach the man in the Brotherhood. As with children so with men, "without expression there is no impression." If a Brotherhood can be linked in thought, prayer and gifts with some particular part of the mission field it is often a helpful plan, and one in which the Mission House will gladly co-operate. One big Brotherhood in the North has the name of its "own evangelist" printed on all its programmes with the list of its other officers. The missionary box is *par excellence* the best method that the men of a Brotherhood can adopt individually for giving to missions.

The Boys Brigade and Boy Scouts. Reference has been made in an earlier chapter to the existence of suitable material which will enable B.B. officers or scoutmasters to tell missionary "yarns" around the camp fire, or in the interval of a "sing-song." In recent years a very valuable financial auxiliary has been pro-

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vided by the Methodist Boys Brigades of the country. Their speciality has been to raise contributions for the entire or part of the annual cost of a cot in one of the hospitals on the mission field. The cot is known as the "95th London," or "5th Plymouth" B.B. cot, and as far as possible correspondence is maintained between the boys at home and the doctor abroad.

These are by no means *all* the auxiliaries that may be employed for missions in an ordinary circuit and Church ; but the enumeration of the above may suggest others to the wide-awake secretary—the only kind, by the way, that is likely to have read thus far !

XII

IN VARIOUS OTHER MATTERS

"Often we talk too much and plan too little."

IN missionary work nearly everything a secretary can turn his hand to comes in useful, sooner or later.

One of our workers who had the joy of seeing the missionary income in his circuit doubled in ten years, says that his three most valuable accessories were his cyclostyle, his camera and his cycle. Certainly the value of some simple and inexpensive duplicating arrangement is great indeed. Notices of meetings, circular letters of stimulus, sets of figures and reports can then be provided at a trifling cost of material, though always at a cost of time. The camera is a great manufacturer of friends among the children. Groups of collectors, photographs of the village chapel with local "pillars" can always be sold, and a worth-while profit made for missions. A few slides of circuit and local interest at the annual missionary lantern service are always popular. The cycle, trap or car makes it easy for the secretary to be present

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at all the missionary meetings, and to use his half-holidays in looking up the local secretaries with whom the personal equation counts so much.

Another missionary enthusiast, an expert draughtsman, saved the time of, and immensely impressed his Quarterly Meeting, by putting into the hands of each member a "blue print" which showed exactly what progress the circuit had made during recent years in its gifts to missions.

The secretary of another circuit was only too glad to accept the offer of a young art student to paint half-a-dozen water-colour panels of babies of the mission field for any primary department that cared to have them.

Nowadays the executives of large businesses usually keep a drawer, or folder, or portfolio labelled "new ideas" or "plans to be worked out later." There is no bigger business on earth than that of "carrying the gospel message to the last man who has never heard it." Any method that the business man finds useful must be of interest to the missionary secretary. The effective display of an advertisement, a striking paragraph in the missionary magazines or the Methodist papers, a happy phrase, something from an entirely different world but adaptable to missionary purposes, may well be put aside for future use.

But it is not enough merely to accumulate ideas, the great thing is to have them available and to use them at the proper time. The

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drawer, or folder, or portfolio must be looked through periodically to prevent the exasperating experience of discovering some wonderful plan a month, or a week or even a day, after the psychological moment for its use has passed.

Few items on a concert programme are more popular than a good recital, and most circuits have ladies and gentlemen who excel in this direction. In many cases they would be thankful for a hint of suitable material to be found in missionary literature. Hints in this connection will always be given gladly by the Mission House.

From the days of the Crusaders right down to the twentieth century, the value of a good battle-cry has been proved. "A good phrase is worth a thousand arguments," declares one missionary leader. In recent years the slogans, "Better than the best of the last ten years," "Half the income in the first half of the year," "Five per cent. increase every year for five years," have been good rallying cries. The following missionary mottoes have been used by various friends to good effect.

"Beyond the best there is a better."

"Not our share but our best."

"Achievement at home means advance on the field."

"The world will never be won with spare cash."

"Gifts for missions are a war loan for our Lord."

Any missionary worker who is called upon to expend money on printing, even if only a

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small sum, should know something about the principles of advertising and how to display his "copy" to the best advantage. Several useful and inexpensive little volumes on the subject are published. If one of these is read through carefully once and annotated, and then glanced through from time to time to ensure that its teaching is being lived up to, missionary money spent in printer's ink will be likely to yield the maximum return.

XIII

IN THE DISTRICT

“ Who wants an easy life ? A man who is a man scorns a soft job.”

A TRADITION has come down from an earlier Methodist age that in those remote days a district missionary committee never expected, and never was expected, to do any work. The committee was considered to serve one useful purpose, it gave safe seats in the Synod to six laymen who deserved well of their brethren.

The programme for the year was, to meet for half-an-hour, never more, directly after the September Synod to discuss the itinerary of the Conference deputation, and for another half-an-hour some time in April to consider the missionary income for the past year. If the income was up they were glad, if it was down they were sorry, but of course it was a matter for which the committee had but little responsibility. Besides there really wasn't time to go into matters very fully, another district committee was to meet for the next half-hour—who ever heard of any district committee wanting more than thirty minutes for its business !

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All this belongs to the long, long ago. The present position of missionary work in Methodism would not be what it happily is but for the enthusiastic co-operation and hard work of the district officers and committees.

“In our district,” says one veteran treasurer, “membership of the district missionary committee is coming to be looked upon as the blue-ribbon which the Synod confers upon the successful circuit worker for missions with the call to further service in the same great cause.” When a district committee is composed of ministers and laymen of that type, and when the secretaries and the treasurer are keenest of all, then things begin to happen, and it is exhilarating merely to hear about them in far-away London.

All that has been said in the first chapter as to the importance of the secretariat of a circuit applies, and more so, to the missionary secretariat of a district. We have heard in the past of the office of district ministerial secretary being willy-nilly associated with some particular Conference appointment, and that “number two” in a certain circuit always held that post. This is obviously absurd. The chairman and the Synod will want the best man for the post, quite irrespective of whether his predecessor in that particular pastorate did or did not have the same portfolio. “Foreign missions shall have the very best man I can find in my district,” remarked one chairman; “I don’t care how young and unknown he may be provided he is capable

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and keen, and when I have made him secretary I'll back him for all I am worth."

To quote yet again : " Get a man with a plan. A man without a plan is as bad as a plan without a man." If God gives to any man the responsibility for missionary leadership in a district, it is no extra ! It is part of His plan for that man's life, and it must be fitted into the whole. The minister and layman should divide the secretarial work fairly between them and keep in the closest possible touch. A circuit secretary may conceivably in a few years reach the maximum development of missionary activity. When, however, the responsibility is for a district there is a life-time of work and more in overtaking all the possibilities that are presented.

The district treasurer, too, is a very important official indeed. The Missionary Society is fortunate in possessing such helpers as those whose names are found in its report as treasurers for the various districts. They work, too, as we at the Mission House know full well. At the end of January for instance there is very considerable pressure upon every district treasurer, and all through the year he is busy not merely in acknowledging remittances but in the use of his official position, in such ways as his own experience may prove best, to encourage the circuits with which he has so constant and close a contact through their treasurers. A word of appreciation of work well done is immensely valued in any circuit when it comes from a district treasurer.

In the district

The district missionary committee consists of six ministers and six laymen elected annually by the September Synod. Each year a layman and a minister retire but they are eligible for re-election. In addition six other ministers and six other laymen "of known missionary sympathy and experience" can be, and almost without exception are, co-opted to serve on the committee. The second twelve do not share the privilege of the first twelve in being members of the Synod, but what is far more important they can and should share to the full the greater privilege of helping in the almost limitless work which a district committee can do.

Those responsible owe it to themselves as well as to the cause they represent, to be quite honest in making nominations for membership of the district committee. The rule is that a layman and a minister retire annually, but not necessarily the two who have been members longest. It is worth considering whether the actual rule should not be that those members should retire who found themselves unable to attend committee meetings or to help appreciably in the specific work assigned to the committee, viz., "to supervise and promote efficiency" in the missionary work of the district.

A district committee is required by Conference to meet at least once a quarter. Of course districts like circuits vary very greatly in the matter of accessibility, and in a few cases it is alike difficult and costly to secure more frequent meetings. The missionary secretary of a com-

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pact district in the North of England has little patience with the idea of only four meetings a year. He says: "We meet, for a good solid hour too, every month of the year, except perhaps July and August. We find it well worth the small cost of postage to follow the example of the Missionary Committee itself and issue a detailed agenda with the summons to each meeting of the committee."

The chief function of a district missionary committee is to exercise oversight, of the very friendliest kind, over the whole field of missionary work in the district; always appreciative, always full of tactful suggestion, never inquisitorial and never censorious and yet with a high standard both for itself and the circuits. To see a district committee at work in these later days is really a fine object-lesson in efficiency.

The Mission House with the utmost confidence gives a free hand to each district committee in the matter of district expenses, and it is quite in order for the district treasurer to defray the cost of any kind of missionary propaganda in his district authorised by his committee, including if necessary the travelling expenses of members from a distance attending committee meetings. Many a desirable development in the circuits can only be secured by the district committee assuming financial responsibility.

Every district committee will want to meet immediately after its appointment in September; there are sure to be changes in the per-

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sonnel especially among the ministers, and at that meeting the committee will "find itself," and settle down into solid work, individually and collectively, for the winter.

One of the best agendas for a district committee that we have ever seen is given in detail because of the value of the suggestions which are obvious in every line.

1. Minutes—taken as read, a copy having been circulated to each member of the committee.
2. Business arising therefrom.
3. Report on attendances of members during last three years.
4. Election of co-opted members (if left to the Committee).
5. District treasurer's report.
 - (a) Total.
 - (b) Amount for each circuit and comparisons with previous year.
6. Action (if any) to be taken re circuits not remitting anything, or only a small proportion of year's income.
7. Any suggestions for helping the circuits.
 - (a) A panel of speakers, ministers and laymen.
 - (b) Sectional rallies of workers and of children.
 - (c) Educational work, e.g. securing visit to the district of a mission study officer of the Mission House.

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- (d) Delegates from the district committee to visit each circuit by arrangement.
- 8. Possibility of a district "aim" for the current year.
- 9. Report on the number of branches of the Helpers' Union and of registered study circles in the district.
- 10. Arrangements for use of time of Conference deputation.
- 11. Review of missionary activities in the Sunday School and the Wesley Guild.
- 12. Next meeting of the committee.
 - (a) Time and place.
 - (b) Arrangements for a rally of local missionary workers to follow the committee meeting.

An ex-missionary pleads for more time at district committees for prayer on behalf of the work at home and abroad. "Perhaps," she writes, "other district committees are better than ours in this matter, but a hurried fifty minutes rushed through seems to me quite inadequate and hardly worth several shillings spent in railway fares. It is not only the fault of whoever happens to be in the chair; some busy men sit almost with watch in hand, men who are really keen too, and, when we've talked over various plans and some hearts are longing to pray over them together, the closure comes in the form of a formal benediction. Student Movement committees are real means of grace,

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and of them it is literally true that advance is made on the knees. It seems to me that what is wanted is an occasional retreat—a missionary Swanwick—for district committees.”

The Mission House keeps a record on the card system of the missionary income of all circuits. A copy of this for any particular district will be willingly sent to any district official if a few days' notice is given. Such a tabular record reveals a very great deal, though of course not everything. Let this record be put into the hands of say a minister and a layman and let them give their joint deductions at the September committee meeting. There will then be no shortage of work for individual members during the following months.

What is wanted is that our missionary work shall be as well done everywhere as it is already well done in many places. For example, glancing over the circuit figures we are led to wonder why two country circuits with just the same resources should show such a disparity in their missionary income. One circuit returns £70 under boxes, the other only £7. Can the secretary of the first circuit, accompanied perhaps by a member of the district committee, meet the circuit officials of the second and tell them just how that £70 has been secured?

Again, two circuits, in the town this time, both with about the same membership and both in an artisan neighbourhood, have an income respectively of £200 and £40 from children's efforts. On looking closer at the figures we see

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that in the first circuit the young people raise their income by means of Juvenile Associations, while the second circuit is still content to appeal to its boys and girls once a year only by means of the old-fashioned Christmas Offering cards. Surely this difference in result because of difference in method only wants to be pointed out to the missionary officials and the Sunday-school authorities of any circuit to receive attention at once.

The analysed income, too, shows any weakness there may be in adult subscriptions, and it is quite a common experience to find that this side of the work might be very much strengthened. We can in the same way see at a glance that medical boxes are worked with most satisfactory results in some places, and we ask why not in more, why not in all?

A careful eye must also be kept on "expenses" by the district officers. They may in this connection need to somewhat restrain a few circuits, and they may also need to stimulate others. Efficiency and economy are never contradictory qualities, generally they are complementary.

The "H.O.D. Magazine" throws light on another important aspect of missionary finance, viz. : the remittances from the circuit month by month. Why should there be such inequality of result in this connection? The district committee will wish to learn how it is that some circuits have been so successful in this connection and they will try to secure that all circuits adopt the same methods.

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The district officers and the district committee will know the circumstances of the district as a whole, and they will know when it is opportune to initiate any special district movement such as the issue of a thousand new boxes (perhaps simultaneously in a certain week), doubling the district circulation of the "Foreign Field," holding at least one study circle in every circuit, arranging schools for adult collectors in grouped areas followed by a thorough canvass of every congregation, organising a missionary motor-tour in the country circuits or a missionary eisteddfod with a challenge shield or banner, or it may be moving back missionary meetings from the winter to the summer months.

"I find," says one district secretary, "that it is far better than getting anyone from headquarters to use the successful missionary enthusiasts we have in our own district. Anyone so inclined can vote some new method utterly impossible when it is advocated by a gentleman who lives in Bishopsgate; when, however, the suggestion is made by a local Swanwicker or by some other worker who has proved its value in the very next circuit, then even the most conservative officials are bound to admit that there may be something in it. And it is surprising to what lengths of argument the reformer will go in driving home his points. It is really an education in itself to see a layman dealing with his brother-layman, and still more so to see a minister dealing faithfully with his brother-minister."

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Finance is only one matter among many with which the district committee will concern itself. Missionary education in all its many forms, as detailed in Chapter VII, will require just as much careful oversight. If a circuit is doing little or nothing financially, the district committee will not long remain in ignorance of the fact. There is no such obvious evidence of inactivity in the equally important matter of missionary education. It is for the district committee to find out what is being done and to see how far their help is required to secure that more be done and that it be better done.

Another all-important aspect of missionary work in any district is the fostering of the Helpers' Union. It is a great gain when a member of the district committee will accept special responsibility for this department and will get into personal touch with the circuits with a view to the carrying out of the suggestions made in Chapter VIII.

The district committee can also render invaluable help, especially to the weaker and more remote circuits, if it can arrange for a panel of speakers, ministers and laymen (women as well as men), who are each prepared to give a certain number of evenings, during say the early autumn, to missionary meetings outside their own circuits. The committee should impose certain conditions upon circuits using the services of such speakers. The local friends must regard themselves as pledged to find a chairman and if necessary a conveyance, and to make such

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efforts to secure a congregation as are outlined in Chapter V.

The greatest service that the officers and the various individual members of a district committee can render to the cause is to plan carefully how personally to reach the workers in even the remotest circuits. It is an experienced and greatly beloved district secretary who sums up his experience thus: "Circulars and questionaries are all very well, but what I am relying on more and more is the intimate personal contact with ministers and laymen who, often under extremely difficult circumstances, are doing heroic work for missions in the circuits. I often drop one of the brethren a card to say that I am going to look him up on a certain morning or afternoon. I get into his study and in the most informal fashion we discuss many things that interest us both. Incidentally we get on to missions. I find out what are his difficulties and how these are being met. I learn the story that is back of the ups and downs of his circuit income. I pass on the proved plans of other men. I try to bring home to him, and once more to myself, the vision of the bigness of the work we are helping when we spend time opening boxes quarterly and planning ahead for village anniversaries. I try to leave the impression that I am a comrade in this service and not a mere official."

Another district secretary makes an equally valuable suggestion. "If one is able occasionally to give two or three days to one circuit and

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go round with the ministers and circuit workers to several of the places, a good deal can be accomplished in the direction of personal fellowship."

The district anniversary is an institution found in only a few Methodist centres. We should like to see the number doubled and in every case the series of meetings made of really outstanding interest in the life of local Methodism. There are two essentials in the success of a district anniversary, viz. a tip-top programme with every item carefully thought out beforehand, and an organisation as perfect as human ingenuity can make it. Speakers, music, stewards, time-table, platform must all receive adequate attention. In this connection it is worth while studying the methods employed in arranging for the great gathering which fills the Albert Hall every year, especially the system of having a local agent in every London Church, large or small, and the requirement that each applicant for a ticket must send in to the local agent a signed form at least a fortnight before the meeting.

The presentation of missionary business at the Synod is a matter to which the district committee should give every ounce of strength it possesses. Each word in the printed report should be weighed and re-weighed. This page, or half-page, of the Synod agenda is valuable only as it contains appreciation of work well done, cast in such a form as to be full of suggestion and inspiration to others. Mere generalities are worse than worthless. Missionary education and intercession should have generous

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space in the review that is presented of the missionary work of the district.

“Let the victory note be sounded in your Synod,” urges one secretary. “Five or even ten minutes may be given to any newly returned missionary coming to live in the district. Let the chairman call upon the young minister of one circuit, or the superintendent of another, or a layman from a third to tell the story of ‘how it was done.’ The tale will often be an inspiration in itself.”

The Synods themselves afford special missionary opportunities to the three district officials. A valuable suggestion comes from the West of England: “It is a good thing to go through the list of representatives in the Synod agenda and to compare it with the list of circuit treasurers and secretaries so as to find out which of them are likely to be present. The district secretaries will then be on the look-out for them and may do much by a few words of encouragement and by showing a real interest in what the circuit is doing.”

The district secretaries are the personal link between the Mission House and the circuits. It is an excellent plan if in one of the intervals of the September Synod they can call together without unnecessary expenditure of time or money the ministerial circuit secretaries and have an intimate personal talk on the work in both district and circuits.

It has been found in several districts a good plan for the district committee to meet each

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quarter in a different centre. After the business of the committee proper, a conference is held of the committee and of the local ministers, secretaries and collectors. A small selection of missionary books is on sale, very practical suggestions are made in the subsequent discussion and a great impetus given to missionary organisation in that particular part of the district.

Another district secretary passes on a suggestion born of his own experience. "Let the district missionary secretary work with and through the other district committees, e.g. Sunday-school, Class Leaders and Local Preachers. Let him also supply early in the summer to each Wesley Guild secretary in his district the names and addresses of returned missionaries and others who can lecture on missions, together with a list of their subjects."

It is tremendously well worth while for the district secretaries to get into direct touch with the juvenile collectors in the circuits. A pioneer in this connection gives his experiences as follows :

"There is no more important function that a district secretary can fulfil than that of keeping in close personal touch with the juvenile collectors. It is not easy, but it can be done. In our district we have about 3,000 collectors. Twice a year each of these receives a personal letter, at the beginning of the year, and again six months later. The first letter invites them to make a success of the anniversary meeting, (1) by coming themselves, (2) by promising to

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invite, each of them, twelve people to attend, (3) by asking twelve different people to give them a halfpenny towards a chairman's fund. This has had a wonderful effect, and each year since we have adopted this method we have had a vast audience of young people and a meeting fairly boiling over with enthusiasm. That is our annual rally. Not having to find a chairman willing to contribute £5 or £10, we can place the meeting under the charge of the man who is best able to further the end we have in view, and we put into his hand not less than £15 as his contribution towards the collection. Three years ago our juveniles raised £2,660, last year they raised £3,830. The letter sent at the beginning of July gives them some hints as to how best to do their work. I receive lots of letters from the collectors. They tell me how they have been inspired to do as much or more by the example of some one mentioned in our report; they tell me what they hope to do in life. I aim at being a personal friend and not a signature, and the consequence is that I know personally hundreds of the collectors up and down our wide district."

Happy is the district and happy is the Missionary Committee served by such workers as these.

XIV

AT THE MISSION HOUSE

"Allow for human nature—ours as well as yours."

It was not long ago that the leading business man's magazine of this country had an eight-page illustrated article devoted to methods in vogue at the Home Organisation Department of our Mission House.

After personal inspection by one of the experts on the staff of that magazine, the verdict was given that the work was carried on at a minimum of expense and at a maximum of efficiency. We may perhaps be allowed to make this quotation: "As a business undertaking alone it will provide many valuable ideas for all classes of business men."

We mention this as a justification from an outside source, if justification be needed, for a chapter on "missionary method *at the Mission House.*"

There are still people, and their bark is usually worse than their bite, who are prepared to grumble at the headquarters of any Movement. And there are still plenty of officials at the central organisation of some Societies who have, alas,

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entirely lost the outsider's point of view—if they ever had it !

Happily in Methodism the most cordial relationships exist between the secretaries and the staff at the Mission House, and the army of missionary workers throughout the country, upon whom our success so very largely depends.

Of course it is not claimed for the staff at Bishopsgate or Carlisle Avenue that they are infallible. Mistakes are sometimes made there, as in other places of business, but never because of slackness, or lack of interest, and at any rate we try not to make the same mistake twice.

Suggestions, or even criticisms, mild or severe, are always welcomed at Bishopsgate, and not only welcomed, but carefully considered, for the day is very far distant when we shall regard our methods as perfect. Those responsible for the Home Organisation of the Missionary Society never forget that there are other interests, and important interests too, in the home Churches and in the life work of those who render such invaluable honorary service to the cause of missions.

The General Committee of the Missionary Society, as appointed by Conference, elects each year a strong sub-committee to deal with all matters relating to Home Organisation. This sub-committee meets monthly and time is ungrudgingly given to its deliberations, which are second to none in interest and importance. One of the General Secretaries of the Society is

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responsible for the business of this Committee, among many other duties, and he has the help of an Assistant Secretary who attends to matters of detail and specialises on the work of this department.

Such questions as the missionary instruction and education of all sections of the home Church, the provision and distribution of suitable missionary literature, the production and circulation of missionary magazines and pamphlets, the issue of missionary boxes and collecting material, the provision and use of lantern slides and curios, the arrangements for the May Meetings in London and of the district deputations in the Provinces, are but a few aspects of the many-sided activities under the care of the Home Organisation committee and its officers.

The financial returns for every circuit are, for convenient reference, recorded on the card system. Over a million and a quarter magazines are issued every year from Carlisle Avenue, where all the necessary account keeping, etc., in this connection is carried on. The Loan Department is kept fully stocked with costumes and a variety of object lessons in various forms, which are in constant demand all through the year, and over-applied-for in the autumn season. In normal times an Exhibition Department is maintained at a high degree of efficiency. A missionary lending library is kept well supplied with books, and every effort made to secure their circulation. Study circle work among adults and juniors is directed by experts, and the all

At the Mission House

important work of the Helpers' Union extended with loving care.

A considerable and a very cordial correspondence is conducted by the Home Organisation Department (usually shortened to "The H.O.D.") with its thousands of local workers. Many of these when in London call at 24 Bishopsgate or at 7 Carlisle Avenue, or better still at both, to talk over any of the above mentioned subjects or others in which they are especially interested. All such visitors are sure of a hearty welcome and personal attention.

A complete register is kept at headquarters of all local workers in the circuits and in individual Churches. It is therefore of the utmost importance that any new appointment or change of address should at once be notified.

Every local worker should have at his elbow the latest catalogue of the "H.O.D." In addition he or she should see each month a copy of the "H.O.D. Magazine" which serves as a means of communication between the Mission House and the various secretaries. This little publication is issued gratis, and contains a variety of valuable suggestions for, and from, workers in the home Churches, as well as a monthly statement as to the money received at the Mission House from each circuit in Methodism.

It will therefore be seen that the Mission House is in a position to help the local worker in a variety of ways, and this it is always most anxious to do. It is the earnest desire of all

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who are responsible, that the "H.O.D." should become a clearing-house for all missionary methods which have been found helpful in the home Churches, and it cannot be too strongly urged that any plan which has proved successful in any place and in any department of our work should at once be communicated to headquarters, so that it may be passed on to others who are working for the same great cause and under much the same conditions.

Perhaps we may mention a few matters which many of our friends will be glad to note with a view to saving themselves (and us) some of life's little worries. There is a constant messenger service between Bishopsgate and Carlisle Avenue, therefore two letters for different departments can always be included in one cover to save postage. In the case of parcels, however, a little thought may prevent unnecessary work at our end. Costumes, lantern slides and returned magazines should be sent to Carlisle Avenue and not to Bishopsgate, while library books should go direct to Bishopsgate and not to Carlisle Avenue.

When any of our friends in the country indulge in the luxury of a telephone trunk call to the Mission House, it may save a good deal of trouble if he makes sure whether he wants to ring up Bishopsgate (London Wall, 421) or Carlisle Avenue (Avenue 610). We need not occupy space in this handbook with the remarks made by a gentleman in Yorkshire who, after waiting an hour, got through to "Avenue 610"

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only to be told that Mr. Hartley's number was "London Wall 421."

Cheques, money orders, postal orders should be made payable to the "Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society," and crossed "London City & Midland Bank." The counterfoils of all postal orders should be kept till the Society's receipt is to hand. Treasury notes should be sent only by registered post. Cash with an order saves a great deal of book-keeping.

It adds considerably to our respect for our correspondents when they do not want answers to letters, and execution of orders *by return*. The office rule is that all orders are attended to in rotation, whether marked "urgent" or not. Surely if any preference were given our first obligation is to our friends who have taken the trouble, and who have had the foresight, to write to us in good time. Hysterical telegrams for parcels of costumes by certain trains, and expressed letters received Saturday mid-day ordering collecting books wanted on Sunday are not the most encouraging communications we get from our friends. Nobody can hold us responsible, can they, if a meeting is advertised at which certain articles are required from our Loan Department and the booking of these is left to the eleventh hour, when there is no longer any apparatus free for that particular date?

It saves somebody's time for some other bit of missionary work if orders are specific. Vague requests for "some," a "supply," "as last


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year," necessarily cause delay, and our attempts to translate such orders into exact quantities are likely to be equally unsatisfactory at the other end.

Of course accidents happen, and we are prepared to allow for human nature, yours as well as ours !

In view of the difficulties and of the opportunities—let us never forget that they go together—which we know lie ahead of us, may we use our last paragraph to appeal for a still closer comradeship between those of us whom God has placed at the Mission House and those whom He has placed in the circuits, that our common work in every detail may be done as in His sight and simply and solely for His glory.



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